Antibiotic Alert

Shortage of tinidazole

This alert provides information for SA Health staff regarding the current shortage and pending discontinuation of tinidazole\(^1\), and provides guidance from the SA expert Advisory Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (SAAGAR) for alternative antibiotic therapy.

Tinidazole is a nitroimidazole antibiotic, with a similar spectrum of activity to metronidazole. It is effective in the treatment of bacterial vaginosis, amoebiasis, and protozoal infections (for example, giardiasis and trichomoniasis).

Summary of issues

The Fasigyn\(^{®}\) brand of tinidazole 500mg tablets were discontinued in Australia as of 31\(^{st}\) December 2019.\(^1\) The only remaining brand of tinidazole tablets in Australia, Simplotan\(^{®}\), is currently in short supply and will also be discontinued on the 29\(^{th}\) February 2020.\(^1\) From the 1\(^{st}\) of March 2020, there will be no brands of tinidazole tablets registered with the Therapeutic Goods Administration, but may be available through the Special Access Scheme.\(^2\)

Guidance for alternative antibiotic therapy

The following information should be considered as general advice only and may not apply to individual patient circumstances (e.g. patients with allergies, pregnancy or immunosuppression)

> For bacterial vaginosis, consider oral metronidazole or vaginal metronidazole as per the Therapeutic Guidelines: Antibiotic.\(^3\) Clindamycin is an option in patients with allergy or contraindications to metronidazole and in pregnancy; oral clindamycin can be used at any stage of pregnancy; vaginal clindamycin can be used up until 20 weeks gestation.\(^3\)

> For giardiasis, consider oral metronidazole or as second line therapy, paramomycin.\(^3\) For metronidazole-resistant \textit{G. intestinalis}, nitazoxanide is also an alternative. Neither paromomycin nor nitazoxanide are registered in Australia but are available through the Special Access Scheme.\(^2\)

> For invasive amoebiasis, use oral metronidazole as per the Therapeutic Guidelines: Antibiotic.\(^3\) Paramomycin is recommended for treatment of asymptomatic carriage of \textit{Entamoeba histolytica} to minimise transmission or the risk of invasive disease.\(^3\) Paromomycin must be accessed via the Special Access Scheme.\(^2\)

> Consult an infectious diseases physician or clinical microbiologist if specific advice is required.

References: