Antibiotic Alert

Shortage of oral flucloxacillin & dicloxacillin

This alert provides information regarding national out of stock notices[1,2] for all brands of oral flucloxacillin and dicloxacillin, and provides guidance from the SA expert Advisory Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (SAAGAR) for alternative antibiotic therapy.

Dicloxacillin and flucloxacillin are beta-lactam antibiotics used in the treatment of methicillin-susceptible staphylococcal and streptococcal infections, particularly skin and soft tissue infections.

Summary of issues
All brands of flucloxacillin 250mg and 500mg capsules and dicloxacillin 250mg and 500mg capsules are in short supply due to manufacturing shortages across suppliers which may last until July 2019 for dicloxacillin and October 2019 for flucloxacillin. Continuing limited supply of oral flucloxacillin is available in public hospitals but there is a significant shortage in the community.

Intravenous formulations of these antibiotics are not affected by these shortages.

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, impaired renal function, immunosuppression or neonates).

> Review indication for antibiotic therapy. If there is no current indication, suggest cessation of antibiotic therapy
> Where antibiotic treatment is indicated for methicillin-susceptible Staphylococcus aureus and streptococcal infections, consider using cefalexin as an alternative in uncomplicated infections.
> Benzylpenicillin or amoxicillin can be used to treat streptococcal infections
> Consult an infectious diseases physician or clinical microbiologist if specific advice is required.
> Further information on alternatives may be found in Therapeutic Guidelines: Antibiotic.

SAAGAR guidelines
The Intravenous to oral switch clinical guideline for adult patients suggests changing IV flucloxacillin to oral dicloxacillin when stepdown is indicated. Cefalexin is a suitable alternative to oral dicloxacillin in this case.

References:

For more information
Infection Control Service
Communicable Disease Control Branch
Telephone: 1300 232 272
www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/antimicrobials

© Department for Health and Ageing, Government of South Australia. All rights reserved.