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16<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Circular 35/22

**RE: Supply of guideline recommended antibiotics for Group A Strep infections**

Dear Pharmacist,

Please find attached communication issued from Dr Una Fallon, Chair of HSE Incident Management Team for Group A Strep in relation to an update on the supply of liquid preparations of the guideline recommended agents for Group A Strep infections.

The guideline can be found at <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/gp/antibiotic-prescribing/conditions-and-treatments/upper-respiratory/pharyngitis-sore-throat-tonsillitis/pharyngitis-sore-throat-tonsillitis.html>.

Yours faithfully,

Shaun Flanagan  
Assistant National Director  
Primary Care Reimbursement Service



# Memo

**To:** Prescribers, Pharmacists, Consultant Microbiologists, Infectious Diseases Physicians, Antimicrobial Pharmacists, Consultants in Public Health Medicine

**From:** Dr Una Fallon  
Chair of HSE Incident Management Team for Group A Strep.

**Date:** 15/12/2022

**Subject:** Supply of guideline recommended antibiotics for Group A Strep infections

**Ref:** 221215 – 2 pages

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Dear Colleagues,

In the context of the recent increase in Group A Strep infections in children, resulting in an increased demand for medicines that are used to treat these infections, we would like to provide an update on the supply of **liquid** preparations of the [guideline](#) recommended agents for Group A Strep infections.

## Phenoxymethylpenicillin

- Kopen™ both liquid preparations out of stock with no expected date of re-supply
- Calvepen™ suspension out of stock, potential re-supply in January
- There is EMP supply available

## Cefalexin

- 125mg/5ml & 250mg/5ml - no supply issues expected

## Amoxicillin

- 125mg/5ml & 250mg/5ml - no supply issues expected

## Clarithromycin

- 125mg/5ml & 250mg/5ml - no reports of a shortage from the marketing authorisation holder

Given the increased demand for certain products to ensure the continued availability of the medicines, we suggest you bear this information in mind when prescribing and ordering these medicines.



**For prescribers:**

As liquid formulation may be unavailable, consider rounding doses to the nearest capsule/tablet strength to facilitate administration of capsule/tablets. For further guidance on this see the following resource [Healthier Together | Pill Swallowing \(Kidzmed\)](https://www.nenc-healthiertogether.nhs.uk) ([www.nenc-healthiertogether.nhs.uk](https://www.nenc-healthiertogether.nhs.uk)).

If a patient is being prescribed antibiotics, please ensure a supply is available in the community pharmacy. It may be necessary to prescribe an alternative antibiotic if supply of the first line agent is not possible.

With added demands on limited antibiotic stock, please keep antibiotic prescriptions to the minimum effective duration.

For children with uncomplicated bacterial infections being sent home on antibiotics (without requiring admission) please refer to the HSE community antibiotic guidelines for advice on antibiotic choice and duration: [www.antibioticprescribing.ie](https://www.antibioticprescribing.ie)

**For pharmacists:**

Additionally, please be aware that the marketing authorisation holders and wholesalers may have implemented allocations to ensure equitable distribution of the medicines.

Please be aware that in some cases, the products may appear as unavailable on their ordering system but additional stock above an allocation may be accessed by contacting the wholesaler or marketing authorisation holder.

Dr Una Fallon

Chair of Incident Management Team for Group A Strep.