



6 March 2026

Medicine Supply Alert Notice

Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension

Priority: Level 2*
Valid until: early June 2026

Issue

1. Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free will be out of stock from mid-March until early June 2026.
2. Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension is out of stock; resupply date is to be confirmed.
3. Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg and 160mg/800mg tablets remain available and can support increased demand.
4. Unlicensed supplies of co-trimoxazole oral suspension may be sourced, lead times vary.

Advice and Actions

5. Until supply issues resolve, clinicians/prescribers in primary and secondary care should:
 - reserve remaining supplies of co-trimoxazole oral suspensions for patients with enteral feeding tubes or on part doses not deliverable by co-trimoxazole tablets;
 - in all other patients requiring co-trimoxazole, consider prescribing co-trimoxazole tablets, using either half a tablet or a full tablet to deliver the required dose; tablets may be crushed (see Additional Information section)
 - consider prescribing unlicensed co-trimoxazole oral suspension only where licensed alternatives are not available. Prescribers should work with local pharmacy teams to ensure orders are placed within appropriate time frames as lead times may vary.
6. If the above options are not considered appropriate, advice should be sought from specialists on management options.
7. The Scottish Antimicrobial Prescribing Group (SAPG) has advised that both co-trimoxazole 40mg/200 mg/5 ml oral suspension (sugar free) and co-trimoxazole 80mg/400 mg/5 ml oral suspension are used across Scotland and particularly within secondary care when the tablet formulations of cotrimoxazole are not suitable. These formulations may be used as oral or IV to oral switch options for a range of indications including intra-abdominal infections, urinary tract infections, and skin and respiratory infections. Local Antimicrobial Management Teams (AMTs) will therefore need to identify suitable alternatives where necessary, and this will be determined at local level.

Additional Information

Clinical Information

8. Use of co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg or 160mg/800mg strength tablets:

- For a 40mg/200mg dose give HALF of a co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg tablet (off-label manipulation)
- If the patient is unable to swallow tablets, they may be crushed and mixed in a small amount of water/apple puree/soft food before administration (off-label manipulation)
- For patients on enteral feeding tubes there is an increased risk of tube blockage if crushed/dispersed tablets are used so this is not recommended

Links to further information:

- [SmPC - Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension](#)
- [SmPC - Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension](#)
- [SmPC – Co-trimoxazole tablets](#)
- [BNF – Co-trimoxazole](#)

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

9. The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed co-trimoxazole oral suspension.

10. Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml and 80mg/400mg/5ml preparations have been sourced, please confirm with importer if a particular formulation type is required, for example sugar free formulation. (Please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):

- Alcatia Pharma
- Alium Medical
- Genetech Pharmaceuticals
- Mawdsleys Unlicensed
- Tanner Pharma
- Target Healthcare

11. Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine must consider the relevant guidance and Health Board governance procedures. Please see the links below for further information:

- [The supply of unlicensed medicinal products](#), Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
- [Professional Guidance for the Procurement and Supply of Specials](#), Royal Pharmaceutical Society
- [Prescribing unlicensed medicines](#), General Medical Council (GMC)

Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) website

12. The UK Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in conjunction with the Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) have launched an online Medicines Supply Tool, which provides up to date information about medicine supply issues. To access the online Medicines Supply Tool

you need to register with the [SPS website](#). Registration for access to the website is available to UK healthcare professionals and organisations providing NHS healthcare. The tool is located under the Tools tab and then click on the Medicines Supply option.

13. Prescribers, pharmacy professionals, and pharmacy procurement leads in Scotland are encouraged to register with the SPS website and use its Medicine Supply Tool to stay up to date concerning medicines supply disruptions. Please be aware that while medicines supply issues will appear on the SPS website, some of the recommended actions may not always be appropriate / relevant within the Scottish context.

Enquiries

14. Enquiries from Health Boards or healthcare professionals should be directed in the first instance to PharmacyTeam@gov.scot (primary care) or NSS.NHSSMedicineShortages@nhs.scot (secondary care).