

Priadel (lithium carbonate) tablets – discontinuation by the manufacturer: initial advice to prescribers in primary and secondary care.

Background

Essential Pharma are discontinuing Priadel 200mg and 400mg tablets (but not Priadel liquid). A [Supply Disruption Alert](#) was issued in August, indicating that stocks would likely be exhausted by April 2021, however some difficulties with obtaining stock are already being encountered (see below for details on how to obtain stock).

Branded prescribing is required for lithium preparations. Other brands of lithium carbonate tablets currently available in the UK are Camcolit 400mg controlled release tablet, Lithium Carbonate Essential Pharma 250mg enteric coated tablets (both from Essential Pharma), and Liskonum 450mg controlled release tablets (Teofarma Srl).

Everyone prescribed Priadel will eventually need to switch to a different brand of lithium. Guidance is currently being produced about which brand to switch to and how this should be done.

What should prescribers do now?

NEW PATIENTS (secondary care initiation):

DO NOT initiate a new lithium prescription with the Priadel brand of lithium carbonate.

ONLY initiate with either **Liskonum 450mg tablets*** or with **Camcolit 400mg tablets***.

* There are some important differences between these tablets which may affect choice – please see [“How to start Camcolit or Liskonum, OHFT Guidance”](#).

PATIENTS CURRENTLY PRESCRIBED PRIADEL:

Continue to prescribe Priadel for now. Oxford Health is producing switch guidance and is working closely with the CCGs and other colleagues about how best to implement this, from both a safety and practicality perspective.

Understandably there may already be concerns amongst patients, particularly as this has had a lot of media attention. However, please reassure patients that this is in hand and please do not carry out a switch or refer patients to secondary care until advised otherwise.

An update to these recommendations will be made and communicated as soon as possible. Shared care guidance will also be updated accordingly.

Obtaining stock – useful information for community pharmacists.

Essential Pharma have put in place monthly quotas in order to prevent pharmacies from stockpiling. Some quotas have been exceeded earlier than expected, resulting in some localised shortages.

Essential Pharma have provided reassurance that if any hospital or community pharmacy is in need of urgent stock of Camcolit or Priadel tablets they can be obtained through their distributor, Movianto (tel. 01234 248 500 / email: Orders.UK@movianto.com).



IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTE:

Priadel liquid remains available, however the liquid formulation is the CITRATE salt of lithium, not the carbonate salt. **Lithium citrate and lithium carbonate are NOT interchangeable on a mg for mg basis.**

- Priadel liquid 520mg/5ml – contains 5.4mmol Li+ per 5ml
- Priadel 200mg tablets – contain 5.4mmol Li+ per tablet.

Therefore, 1 x 200mg lithium carbonate tablet = 1 x 5ml dose of liquid (520mg lithium citrate).

Also, as lithium citrate is an immediate release formulation the dose must be divided and given twice a day.