

National Supply Shortage of your prescribed medication for ADHD

The Department of Health and Social Care has alerted us that there is a national supply shortage of the medication prescribed to help manage your ADHD symptoms.

The supply disruption of these products is caused by a combination of manufacturing issues and an increased global demand.

How long will the shortage last?

At present, the supply disruptions are expected to resolve at various dates between October and December 2023. These dates may be subject to change.

This is a national supply problem and all UK ADHD services; Paediatrics, CAMHS, Adults, and Pharmacies within the community and in hospitals are affected.

The medicines affected are:

- Methylphenidate prolonged-release capsules and tablets,
- Lisdexamfetamine capsules, and
- Guanfacine prolonged-release tablets.
- There are also on-going shortages of the Atomoxetine capsules and liquid.

What should I do if I cannot get my ADHD prescription from the pharmacy?

If one pharmacy is unable to obtain supplies, please try a different pharmacy.

The following link will help you find Pharmacies in your local area:

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy>

Pharmacies may use different suppliers or wholesalers to source medicines so availability will depend on whether each pharmacy's suppliers have stock or not. Please try visiting or calling independent pharmacies as well as the larger Pharmacy chains, as their suppliers will differ.

Where there is a known shortage of a medicine, supply levels can change quickly. This is why pharmacies in one area may be able to find a medicine and others may not.

Alternatively, it may be best to leave the prescription with a pharmacy that could check wholesaler stock levels daily and place an order. If the medicine remains unavailable, then an alternative medicine may need to be prescribed. Consult your GP or ADHD service as soon as possible if you cannot get your prescription from the pharmacy.

Please **do not** buy medicines from the internet or from abroad as these may be out of date, diluted or fake and could be dangerous to your health.

Are there alternative medications available?

Other ADHD products remain available, they may not be suitable for everyone and may not be able to meet the increases in demand.

We know how important getting your medicines is. We are always happy to talk to you about your medicines and to explain why getting your medicine may be difficult at the moment.

You may be offered the choice between taking a treatment break or changing your medication to one that is not currently affected by the supply shortage.

The change in medication may mean you are taking medication more often through the day, or that they are tablets instead of capsules.

Your specialist team will liaise closely with your GP and work together to minimise disruption. There may be temporary changes to how and where you collect your prescription/ medication.

Once the supply shortage has been resolved your medication will be changed back to the medicine you were previously prescribed, as appropriate.

Please be aware that there may still be delays at Pharmacies in obtaining the newly prescribed medication.

Is it safe to stop taking ADHD medication abruptly?

Please consult your GP practice or ADHD service for guidance if you think you are running out of medication and cannot obtain a supply.

National treatment guidelines recommend having regular treatment breaks from ADHD medications. It is not unusual to stop taking medication over the weekend or during school holidays.

Therefore, no harm should come from stopping the medication, but this should be done in a planned way.

If you are prescribed **Guanfacine (Intuniv®)** please contact your ADHD service and this medication must be stopped slowly as it can cause your blood pressure to increase if stopped suddenly. Consult your GP or ADHD service as soon as possible if you cannot get your prescription from the pharmacy.

The below websites have information that might be useful in helping you manage your condition and any changes in symptoms because of the medication shortage:

- <https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/resources/>
- <http://www.addiss.co.uk/allabout.htm>
- <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/adhd/>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/adhd-and-mental-health/>