

Prescribing Hot Topics



Updated prescribing advice for Metoclopramide

Following a review of Metoclopramide by the European Medicines Agency, it was concluded that the risks associated with long term and/or high dose Metoclopramide outweighed any potential benefits. This was associated with the well established neurological effects such as short term extrapyramidal disorders and tardive dyskinesia. The risk of these neurological side effects is greater in children than adults.

In response to these findings it has been advised that the following restrictions be placed on the prescribing of Metoclopramide:

- Metoclopramide should only be prescribed for short-term use (up to 5 days)
- Use of metoclopramide is contraindicated in children younger than 1 year
- In children aged 1–18 years, metoclopramide should only be used as a second-line option for prevention of delayed chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting and for treatment of postoperative nausea and vomiting
- In adults, metoclopramide remains indicated for the prevention and treatment of nausea and vomiting associated with chemotherapy, radiotherapy or surgery and in the treatment of migraine (where it may also be used to improve absorption of oral analgesics)
- The maximum recommended dose in adults and children should be restricted to 0.5mg/kg body weight in 24 hours with oral liquid formulations given via an appropriately designed, graduated oral syringe to ensure dose accuracy in children.
- Higher strength formulations are to be discontinued including oral liquids containing more than 1mg/ml.

Prescribers should review any patient currently taking regular metoclopramide and to take special care with those at increased risk of cardiovascular reactions.

Following a review of Metoclopramide it has been concluded that the risks outweigh any potential benefits when prescribed long term or at high doses.

Prescribers are advised to review any patients currently receiving Metoclopramide on a regular basis.

For dosing guidance prescribers should refer to the BNF/BNF for Children