

Alternatives to Spectinomycin for Gonorrhoea Treatment

Background

The production of spectinomycin, which is recommended for the treatment of *N. gonorrhoeae* in cases where quinolones and cephalosporins are contraindicated, has been disrupted leaving some concerns about the accessibility of the drug. Pharmacia Corporation (US) is the sole provider of this antibiotic in North America, and announced the discontinuation of spectinomycin in April 2001. The company has reversed its decision and intends to resume the production of spectinomycin later this year. They are aiming to have the product available in the U.S. by mid-October. In the meantime, the Food and Drug Administration has extended the expiration date to December 31, 2001 instead of June 30, 2001 of certain spectinomycin powder lots after removal of the expired diluent. To verify whether a particular lot of spectinomycin powder can still be used, contact Wendy Johnson, Pharmacia Corporation, at 1-800-976-7741 ext. 30110.

Since a supply gap may occur in the interim, the following recommendations outline different options for the treatment of gonorrhoea in individuals that have documented cephalosporin allergy and are pregnant or are strongly suspected to have fluoroquinolone-resistant gonorrhoea.

Treatment Options

To be used in conjunction with the Gonococcal Infections section in the *Canadian STD Guidelines, 1998 Edition*.

1. Spectinomycin 2 g IM in a single dose

At the present time, there is no remaining stock to be issued from Pharmacia Canada. It may be possible to locate an off-shore manufacturer to supply spectinomycin on a case-by-case basis. Contact the local Drug Information Centre for more information. Once a manufacturer has been selected, Therapeutic Products Directorate, Health Canada has a mechanism called the Special Access Program (SAP) in place to provide access to non-marketed drugs for treating patients where other therapies are unsuitable or unavailable.

Please see the Appendix for a list of Drug Information Centres across Canada and the sidebar at right for SAP contact information.

2. Azithromycin 2 g orally in a single dose

There are encouraging data on the use of high dose azithromycin (2 g) in treating non-pregnant individuals with gonorrhoea.

How to Request Special Access to an Emergency Drug

Practitioners may fax, phone or write to SAP to request a drug with the following information:

- Practitioner's name and telephone number
- Address of the practitioner's office/clinic or hospital pharmacy where the drug can be delivered
- Drug name and dosage form (e.g., tablet, ointment)
- Manufacturer's name and address
- Total quantity of the drug requested
- Patient's initials, date of birth, gender
- Medical indication for use of the drug
- Rationale for choosing a non-marketed drug over other licensed therapies

Contact information for SAP:
Special Access Program
Therapeutic Products Directorate
Finance Building, 2nd floor
Tunney's Pasture
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 1B6
A/L 0202C1
Phone: (613) 941-2108
(8:30-16:30 EST)
After hours phone: (613) 941-3061
Fax: (613) 941-3194
Email: EDR_Drugs-BPA@hc-sc.gc.ca
Internet: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb-dgps/therapeut



The following is a list of physicians who perform cephalosporin desensitization. Please note that only those physicians who were contacted by the Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology and agreed to have their information contained in this document have been included.

Dr. Eric Leith

302-331 Sheddon Avenue
Oakville ON L6J 1X8
Tel: 905-842-6555
Fax: 905-842-4190

University of Western Ontario Drug Allergy Clinic

Tel: 519-685-8167

Dr. Frederick A. White

481 Park St.
Kitchener ON N2G 1N7
Tel: 519-578-9199
Fax: 519-578-6109

Effectiveness in pregnant women has to be extrapolated at this point even though metabolism may be different in pregnant women. Based on limited data, azithromycin has not been associated with adverse fetal outcomes (Class B). Possible side effects include severe gastrointestinal distress. Test of cure is required for all cases using azithromycin.

3. **Cephalosporin desensitisation¹ under the care of an allergy physician**

Because of potential anaphylaxis when performing cephalosporin desensitisation, an allergy physician may perform penicillin skin testing (such test kits are in short supply) to assess the likelihood of an IgE-mediated allergic reaction if a cephalosporin is administered.

If cephalosporin desensitisation is then deemed necessary, it will usually be performed in an ICU setting and requires careful monitoring by an allergy physician. This option should be considered only after all other alternatives have been weighed. A list of allergy physicians who perform cephalosporin desensitisation is shown in the sidebar to the left. Please note that the availability of allergy physicians to perform desensitisation is severely limited and restricted only to major medical centres across the country.

¹ For additional information on this topic, please refer to N Engl J Med 2001;345 (11):804-809.

These recommendations have been prepared in collaboration with Provincial/Territorial partners and national experts. For more information, please contact:

Division of Sexual Health Promotion and STD Prevention and Control
Bureau of HIV/AIDS, STD and TB
Health Canada
7th Floor, Jeanne Mance Building
Tunney's Pasture
A.L. 1907A4
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9

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Health Canada

APPENDIX 1

Drug Information Centres

BRITISH COLUMBIA

BRITISH COLUMBIA DRUG & POISON INFORMATION CENTRE

1081 Burrard St.,
Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1Y6
Tel: (604) 682-2344, ext. 2126
Fax: (604) 631-5262
Contact: Derek Daws, Managing Director
E-mail: daws@dpic.bc.ca
Expertise: B.C. Regional Adverse Drug Reaction Program, drug usage review, drugs in pregnancy, herbal medicine, toxicology A regional centre. Available to all health professionals

SENIORS MEDICATION INFORMATION LINE (SMILE)

University of British Columbia
Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences
2146 East Mall,
Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z3
Tel: 1-800-668-6233 (B.C. only)
(604) 822-8010, ext. 6041
Fax: (604) 822-3035
E-mail: rpriatel@unixg.ubc.ca
Contact: Rola Priatel, D.I. Coordinator
Expertise: Asthma

VANCOUVER GENERAL HOSPITAL

Pharmacy Department
855 West 12th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1M9
Tel: (604) 875-4077 Fax: (604) 875-5267
Contact: Nilu Partovi, Supervisor and Clinical Pharmacy Specialist
Written requests only

ROYAL JUBILEE HOSPITAL

Capital Health Region
Pharmacy Department
1900 Fort St.,
Victoria, B.C. V8R 1J8
Tel: (250) 370-8242 Fax: (250) 370-8615
Contact: Jane Bettany, D.I. Coordinator
Expertise: General drug information

VICTORIA GENERAL HOSPITAL

Capital Health Region
Pharmacy Department
1 Hospital Way,
Victoria, B.C. V8Z 6R5
Tel: (250) 727-4636 Fax: (250) 727-4126
E-mail: jdheere@caphealth.org or jdodsworth@caphealth.org
Contact: Jane Dheere, D.I. Pharmacist or Jessie Dodsworth,
D.I. Pharmacist
Expertise: General drug information

ALBERTA

CALGARY REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

Peter Lougheed Centre Pharmacy
3500-26th Ave. N.E.,
Calgary, Alta. T1Y 6J4
Tel: (403) 291-8990 Fax: (403) 291-8889
Contact: Jennifer Herrick, D.I. and Drug Use Evaluation Pharmacist
E-mail: Jennifer.Herrick@crha-Health.ab.ca
For hospital staff only

POISON & DRUG INFORMATION SERVICES (PADIS)

c/o CRHA, Foothills Medical Centre
1403-29th St. N.W.,
Calgary, Alta. T2N 2T9
Tel: (403) 670-1222 or 1-800-332-1082 (Alta. only)
Fax: (403) 670-1472
E-mail: fh-padis@crha-Health.ab.ca
Contact: Cheryl McGrath-Hill, Facilitator – Drug Information Services
Expertise: Computerized databases for statistics, toxicology

CAPITAL HEALTH REGION DRUG INFORMATION CENTRE

Royal Alexandra Hospital Site
Pharmacy Department
10240 Kingsway
Edmonton, Alta. T5H 3V9
Tel: (780) 477-4463 Fax: (780) 491-5116
Contact: Karen Horon, D.I. Pharmacist
Expertise: General drug information
Services are primarily for hospital staff

CAPITAL HEALTH REGION DRUG INFORMATION CENTRE

University of Alberta Hospital Site
Pharmacy Department
8440-112 St.
Edmonton, Alta. T6G 2B7
Tel: (780) 407-7404 Fax: (780) 492-0885
Contact: Carol Borynec, D.I. Pharmacist
Expertise: General drug information
Services are primarily for hospital staff

SASKATCHEWAN

SASKATCHEWAN CONSUMER DRUG INFORMATION CENTRE (CDIC)

University of Saskatchewan
College of Pharmacy and Nutrition
110 Science Pl.,
Saskatoon, Sask. S7N 5C9
Tel: (306) 975-DRUG or 1-800-665-DRUG (Sask. only)
Fax: (306) 966-6377
Contact: Paul Melnyk or Maya Wagner, D.I. Consultants
Expertise: Consumer drug information to all residents of Saskatchewan
For consumers only

SASKATCHEWAN DIAL ACCESS DRUG INFORMATION SERVICE (DADIS)

University of Saskatchewan
College of Pharmacy and Nutrition
110 Science Pl.,
Saskatoon, Sask. S7N 5C9
Tel: (306) 966-6340 or 1-800-665-3784 (Sask. only)
Fax: (306) 966-6377
Contact: Paul Melnyk, D.I. Consultant
Expertise: Computerized database for statistics and retrieval of previous cases, regional ADR reporting program, provincial drug information service for all health professionals

MANITOBA

HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE

Pharmacy Department
820 Sherbrook St.,
Winnipeg, Man. R3A 1R9
Tel: (204) 787-1097 Fax: (204) 787-3195
Contact: Cathy Sochasky, D.I. Pharmacist
Expertise: General drug information
Not a regional centre: Services primarily for hospital staff

MEDICATION INFORMATION LINE FOR THE ELDERLY (MILE)

University of Manitoba
Room 407-F, Faculty of Pharmacy
Winnipeg, Man. R3T 2N2
Tel: (204) 261-3111 or 1-800-432-1960, ext. 6493 (Man. only)
Fax: (204) 474-7626
E-mail: vanmiddl@ms.umanitoba.ca
Contact: Betty Van Middlesworth,
Pharmacist Consultant
Expertise: Medication information for elderly, care providers and health-care professionals

MISERICORDIA HEALTH CENTRE

Pharmacy Department
99 Cornish Ave.,
Winnipeg, Man. R3C 1A2
Tel: (204) 788-8242 Fax: (204) 774-8488
E-mail: afriesen@miseri.winnipeg.mb.ca
Contact: Anne Friesen, Coordinator, D.I./Drug Utilization Review
Expertise: General drug information
Services primarily for hospital staff

ST. BONIFACE GENERAL HOSPITAL

Pharmacy Department
409 Tache Ave.,
Winnipeg, Man. R2H 2A6
Tel: (204) 237-2630 Fax: (204) 237-2165
Contact: Anita Richard, D.I. Pharmacist
Expertise: General drug information
Services for hospital staff only

ONTARIO

HAMILTON HEALTH SCIENCES CORPORATION

McMaster Site
Drug Information Centre
Pharmacy Department, Box 2000,
Hamilton, Ont. L8N 3Z5
Tel: (905) 521-2100, ext. 6019
Fax: (905) 521-5008
Contact: Marita Tonkin or Gita Sobhi, D.I. Pharmacists
E-mail: tonkin@exchange1.cmh.on.ca or sobhi@exchange1.cmh.on.ca
Services primarily for hospital staff

HENDERSON GENERAL HOSPITAL

Pharmacy Department
711 Concession St.,
Hamilton, Ont. L8V 1C3
Tel: (905) 527-4322, ext. 2190 or
(905) 389-4411 Fax: (905) 575-2643
Contact: Jeff Thompson, Site Co-ordinator, Pharmacy Department
Expertise: Investigational studies in oncology, pharmacokinetics of vancomycin, gentamicin and tobramycin
Services for hospital staff only

GRAND RIVER HOSPITAL

Kitchener-Waterloo Health Centre
Pharmacy Department
P.O. Box 9056,
Kitchener, Ont. N2G 1G3
Tel: (519) 749-4300, ext. 2206
Fax: (519) 749-4228
Contact: Don McCuen, Clinical Pharmacist, D.I. and Antibiotic Utilization
Expertise: Home IV therapy, palliative care, dialysis, computerized drug information, pediatrics, critical care
A regional centre: Services for anyone

KINGSTON GENERAL HOSPITAL

Pharmacy Department
76 Stuart St., Kingston, Ont. K7L 2V7
Tel: (613) 548-2305
Fax: (613) 548-6079
Contact: Any on-duty pharmacist
Expertise: General drug information

LONDON HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE – LONDIS

University Hospital Campus
Department of Pharmacy Services
339 Windermere Rd., Box 5339
London, Ont. N6A 5A5
Tel: (519) 663-3172 or 1-800-363-8434
(for area codes 705, 519 & 905 only)
Fax: (519) 663-2968
Contact: Gail Judd, Linda Hooper, Sandra Campbell, Susan Lovell,
Laura Drost, D.I. Pharmacists
Expertise: Transplantation, neurology, cardiology, oncology, pediatrics
A regional centre: services are available to subscribers

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF EASTERN ONTARIO (CHEO)

Pharmacy Department
401 Smyth Rd.,
Ottawa, Ont. K1H 8L1
Tel: (613) 738-3614 or (613) 737-2228
Fax: (613) 738-4206
E-mail: swartz@cheo.on.ca
Contact: Ronald Swartz, Director of Pharmacy
Expertise: Pediatrics
Not a regional service: Services for hospital staff only

OTTAWA HOSPITAL, CIVIC CAMPUS

Pharmacy Department
1053 Carling Ave.,
Ottawa, Ont. K1Y 4E9
Tel: (613) 798-5555, ext. 6683 Fax: (613) 761-4350
Contact: Anne Massicotte, D.I. Pharmacist
Expertise: Cardiology/cardiothoracic surgery, geriatrics, critical care,
PCA programs, neurology
Services for hospital staff only

OTTAWA HOSPITAL, GENERAL CAMPUS

Pharmacy Department
Ottawa General Hospital
501 Smyth Rd.,
Ottawa, Ont. K1H 8L6
Tel: (613) 737-8344
Fax: (613) 737-8891
Contact: Mario Bédard, Drug Information Specialist
E-mail: mbedard@ogh.on.ca
Expertise: HIV/AIDS, bone marrow transplantation, neurology, bone and
joint diseases, literature evaluation
Service for hospital staff only

OTTAWA VALLEY REGIONAL DRUG INFORMATION SERVICE (OVRDIS)

Ottawa Hospital, General Campus
501 Smyth Rd.,
Ottawa, Ont. K1H 8L6
Tel: (613) 737-8347 Fax: (613) 737-8891
Contact: Denis Bélanger, D.I. Specialist (dbelanger@ogh.on.ca), or Dina
MacLeod, D.I. Pharmacist (dmacleod@ogh.on.ca)
Expertise: HIV/AIDS, Bone marrow transplantation, neurology, bone and
joint diseases, literature evaluation
Service open to OVRDIS subscribers only

CENTRE FOR ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH, ADDICTION RESEARCH FOUNDATION SITE

Pharmacy Department
33 Russell St.,
Toronto, Ont. M5S 2S1
Tel: (416) 595-6014 Fax: (416) 595-6606
E-mail: ejanecek@arf.org
Contact: Eva Janecek, Head of Pharmacy Services
Expertise: Substance abuse
Services for anyone in Ontario

CENTRE FOR ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH, CLARKE INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY SITE

Pharmacy Department
250 College St.,
Toronto, Ont. M5T 1R8
Tel: (416) 979-6802 Fax: (416) 979-4995
Contact: Kalyna Butler, Head of Pharmacy
Expertise: Psychiatry
A regional centre: Services for anyone

HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN, THE

Pharmacy Department
555 University Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M5G 1X8
Poison info: (416) 813-5900 or
1-800-268-9017 (Ontario only)
Drug info: (416) 813-6703
Motherisk Clinic, Alcohol & Substance Use Line: 1-877-327-4636
(Toll-free)
Motherisk Clinic: (416) 813-6780 (calls from outside Ontario will not be
returned)
Manufacturing-pharmacy: (416) 813-6701
Fax: (416) 813-5880 (Pharmacy Department)
Web site: www.sickkids.com
Contact: Joanne Smith, D.I. Coordinator
E-mail: Joanne.Smith@mailhub.
sickkids.on.ca
Motherisk contact: Susan Santiago
Expertise: Pediatrics, extemporaneous formulations
Not a regional centre: Calls from outside hospitals answered as time
permits

METRO TORONTO HOSPITALS DRUG INFORMATION SERVICE (METRODIS)

Sunnybrook & Women's College
Health Sciences Centre
2075 Bayview Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M4N 3M5
Tel: (416) 480-4514 Fax: (416) 480-6868
Contact: Irene Worthington, coordinator
A regional centre. Services for hospital subscribers

MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL

Department of Pharmacy Services
600 University Ave., Room 1506,
Toronto, Ont. M5G 1X5
Tel: (416) 586-8582 Fax: (416) 586-8353
Web site: www.mtsinai.on.ca
Contact: Any on-duty pharmacist
Expertise: General drug information

ONTARIO PHARMACISTS' ASSOCIATION

Drug Information and Research Centre
301-23 Lesmill Rd.,
Don Mills, Ont. M3B 3P6
Tel: (416) 385-3472 or 1-800-268-8058 Fax: (416) 385-2442
Contact: Kris Wichman, Vice-President of Professional Affairs

ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL

Pharmacy Department
30 Bond St.,
Toronto, Ont. M5B 1W8
Tel: (416) 864-5747 Fax: (416) 864-6058
Contact: Any on-duty pharmacist
Expertise: General drug information
Services for hospital staff only

ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL, WELLESLEY-CENTRAL SITE

Pharmacy Department
160 Wellesley St. E.,
Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1J3
Tel: (416) 926-7099 Fax: (416) 926-5050
Contact: Janice Wells, Director of Pharmacy, Rafelina Greco,
D.I. Pharmacist
Expertise: AIDS treatment, GI therapies using endoscopic procedures,
rheumatology, burn centre, lithotripsy, cystic fibrosis
Services for hospital staff only

SUNNYBROOK & WOMEN'S COLLEGE HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE

Drug Information Service
2075 Bayview Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M4N 3M5
Tel: (416) 480-4513 Fax: (416) 480-6868
E-mail: john.iazzetta@sunnybrook.on.ca
Contact: John Iazzetta, Coordinator, Drug Information Centre
Services for hospital staff only

TORONTO EAST GENERAL AND ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITAL

Department of Pharmaceutical Services,
825 Coxwell Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M4C 3E7
Tel: (416) 469-6036 Pager: (416) 501-3574 Fax: (416) 469-6325
E-mail: pharmcy@tegh.on.ca
Contact: Faith Jenner, D.I. Pharmacist
Expertise: General drug information
Services are available to anyone

TORONTO HOSPITAL

Toronto General Division
Pharmacy Department
200 Elizabeth St.,
Room B216–Eaton N.
Toronto, Ont. M5G 2C4
Tel: (416) 340-3779 Fax: (416) 340-3685
Contact: John Murdoch, D.I. Pharmacist
Services for hospital staff only

QUEBEC**HÔPITAL DU SACRÉ-COEUR DE MONTRÉAL**

Centre d'information pharmaceutique
5400 Blvd. Gouin Ouest,
Montréal, Que. H4J 1C5
Tel: 1-888-265-7692 or (514) 338-2161
Fax: (514) 338-3670
E-mail: cip.hscm@sympatico.ca
Contact: Eva Cohen, Chief Pharmacist
Expertise: Adverse drug reactions
A provincial centre available to subscribers

HOPITAL GENERAL JUIF–SIR MORTIMER B. DAVIS

Pharmacy Department
3755 Chêmin de la Côte Ste. Catherine,
Montréal, Que. H3T 1E2
Tel: (514) 340-8222, ext. 4671
Fax: (514) 340-8201
Contact: Any on-duty pharmacist
Expertise: Adverse drug reaction program, pharmacokinetics, oncology,
patient counselling, drug use evaluation, TPN, IV admixture, neonatology,
drug information bulletins, computerized databases,
research, cardiology
Services primarily for hospital staff

ROYAL VICTORIA HOSPITAL

Pharmacy Department
687 Pine Ave. W.,
Montréal, Que. H3A 1A1
Contact: My Linh Tran, Coordinator of Clinical and Technical Support
Services
Tel: (514) 842-1231 Fax: (514) 843-1474

NOVA SCOTIA**QUEEN ELIZABETH II HEALTH SCIENCES CENTRE**

Drug Information Centre
1796 Summer St., Room 2421,
Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A7
Tel: (902) 473-4234 (Camp Hill site)
(902) 473-6830 (Victoria General site)
Fax: (902) 473-8612 (Camp Hill site)
(902) 473-1606 (Victoria General site)
E-mail: rxcbt@qe2-hsc.ns.ca
Contact: Brian Tuttle, Manager, Drug Information Services
Expertise: Atlantic ADR Regional Centre, drug evaluation program,
computerized drug information databases
DI inquiries for hospital staff only

REGIONAL DRUG INFORMATION SERVICE (RDIS)

Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre
1796 Summer St., Room 2421,
Halifax, N.S. B3H 3A7
Tel: (902) 473-4211 or 1-800-565-3003 (N.B. and P.E.I. only)
Fax: (902) 473-8612
E-mail: rxrdis@qe2-hsc.ns.ca
Contact: Brian Tuttle, Manager
Expertise: General drug information
A regional referral service to external callers in N.S., N.B. and P.E.I.

NEWFOUNDLAND**SCHOOL OF PHARMACY DRUG INFORMATION CENTRE**

Memorial University of Newfoundland
The Health Sciences Centre,
St. John's, Nfld. A1B 3V6
Tel: (709) 737-3377 Fax: (709) 737-7044
Contact: Audrey Fultz, DI Pharmacist
E-mail: afultz@morgan.ucs.mun.ca

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