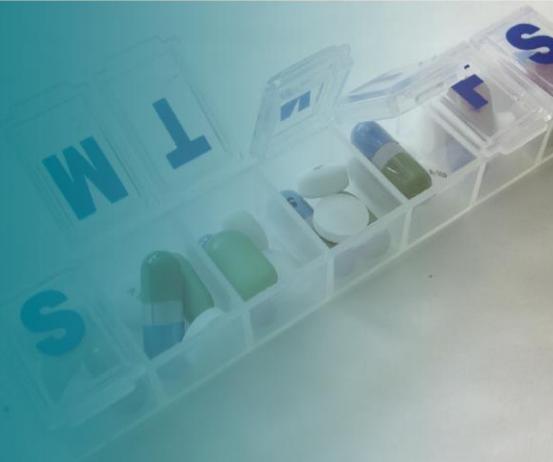


BC PHARMACARE NEWSLETTER

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RANITIDINE RECALLS AND SHORTAGE

Health Canada recently [informed](#) Canadians that it is assessing the issue of an impurity called N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) detected in some ranitidine drugs. Health Canada has now [recalled several different brands and formulations of ranitidine](#) and has stopped distribution of all ranitidine products in Canada until evidence is provided to demonstrate that they do not contain NDMA above acceptable levels. Patients are not advised to stop taking the ranitidine they have, and pharmacies may continue to sell non-recalled products still in stock.

PharmaCare has released the remaining products in the H2 Blockers Reference Drug Program category for full coverage but supply of these products is limited. As a shortage of all H2 blockers has already been observed, PharmaCare has pre-approved Special Authority coverage for first-line proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) for all patients previously on ranitidine or other H2 blockers.

Pharmacists are not able to adapt H2 blocker prescriptions to a PPI. Patients will need to meet with their prescriber to discuss their needs for continued treatment and whether an alternate medication is required. Note that Health Canada has advised patients to continue taking the ranitidine they have, even if it has been recalled, as the risks of discontinuing treatment could be higher than the risk posed by the levels of NDMA in their remaining supply.

PharmaCare coverage for PPIs for patients on H2 blockers is of indefinite duration, and effective as of Friday, September 27, 2019. Patients who have filled a prescription for an H2 blocker between February 1, 2019 and July 31, 2019 should have coverage for a PPI in place. Patients who filled a new prescription for an H2 blocker after July 31, 2019, will need to have their prescriber to submit a [request for Special Authority](#).

For more information on the ranitidine recall and subsequent shortages, please see the [Drug Shortages page](#) on the PharmaCare website. This page will be updated as more information becomes available.

The PharmaCare Newsletter is published by the Pharmaceutical Services Division to provide information to British Columbia's health care providers.

The use of PharmaNet is not intended as a substitute for professional judgment. Information on PharmaNet is not exhaustive and cannot be relied upon as complete. The absence of a warning about a drug or drug combination is not an indication that the drug or drug combination is safe, appropriate or effective in any given patient. Health care professionals should confirm information obtained from PharmaNet, and ensure no additional relevant information exists, before making patient care decisions.



BIOSIMILARS CALL-IN INFORMATION SESSION

There is an error in the conference ID number on page 8 of the Pharmacy Guide sent to you. Please use the conference ID provided below.

PharmaCare will be hosting call-in information sessions to support healthcare practitioners throughout the Biosimilars Initiative. Members of the PharmaCare team will be present at each session to provide information and answer your questions. The first session will be held on October 8, 2019 from 7:00PM to 8:00PM Pacific Time.

To access a session, call the Government of B.C. conferencing service at one of the numbers below, and enter conference ID **675114262** or join the [meeting online](#) through your web browser*. (*Note: Calling in will be audio-only. If you want to ask questions during a session, please attend the meeting online and ask them through your web browser).

From anywhere in B.C., toll-free: 1 888 952-9304

From Vancouver: 1 604 398-9304

From Victoria: 1 250 952-9304

If you wish to be notified when dates are posted for future sessions, please subscribe to the <http://www.gov.bc.ca/biosimilars/pharmacy> webpage.

For more questions and feedback, contact PharmaCare at Biosimilars.Initiative@gov.bc.ca or 1 844 915-5005 Monday to Friday, 8:30AM—4:30PM.