

Information about changes to medicines or treatments on the NHS: **Changes to dosulepin prescribing**

The NHS will be asking doctors to stop or greatly reduce the prescribing of some medicines from December 2017. This is because the medicines are:

- Not as safe as other medicines OR
- Not as good (effective) as other medicines OR
- More expensive than other medicines that do the same thing.

One of these medicines is dosulepin.

This document will explain why the changes are happening and where you can get more information and support.

Why does the NHS want to reduce prescribing of dosulepin?

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) says that dosulepin should not be prescribed for depression because it may be harmful in some people and it is very dangerous in overdose. Death from dosulepin overdose can occur quickly, even before you can be treated in hospital.

As there are quite a lot of safety concerns about dosulepin, all patients currently taking it should have a review with their doctor.

If dosulepin is dangerous should I stop taking it immediately?

You may suffer side effects if you stop taking dosulepin suddenly. Your doctor will support you to reduce your dose of dosulepin gradually before you stop it and slowly introduce a new medicine (if you are to be prescribed one).

What options are available instead of dosulepin?

You can talk to your doctor about the options available so that you can come to a joint decision about what's best for you.

There are now many safer alternative antidepressants to dosulepin that have fewer side effects. It's also possible that you will no longer need to take an antidepressant at all.

Approval date: August 2018

Review date: August 2020

Approved for use in South East London by:

South East London Area Prescribing Committee. A partnership between NHS organisations in South East London: Bexley/ Bromley/ Greenwich/ Lambeth/ Lewisham & Southwark Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) & GSTFT/KCH/SLAM/Oxleas NHS Foundation Trusts & Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Trust

In exceptional (rare) circumstances dosulepin may continue to be prescribed if a consultant or other specialist healthcare professional supports this decision.

What do I do if my medicine has been changed and it's causing me problems?

If you have problems with your new medicine, you should speak to your doctor.

Where can I find more information and support?

- You can speak to your local pharmacist, GP or the person who prescribed the medication to you
- National and local charities can offer advice and support, for example MIND provide a leaflet called 'Making sense of antidepressants': www.mind.org.uk/media/4900726/antidepressants-2016-pdf.pdf
- The NICE information for patients can be found at: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg90/ifp/chapter/About-this-information
- The Patients Association can also offer support and advice: www.patients-association.org.uk/ or call 020 8423 8999
- Healthwatch: www.healthwatch.co.uk

Find out more about the medicines that are being stopped or reduced: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/medicines/items-which-should-not-be-routinely-prescribed/>

If you have any questions about dosulepin prescribing please email them to: england.medicines@nhs.net

This leaflet has been developed by PrescQIPP and adapted for South East London, see [here](#). Last accessed 17.08.18

Approval date: August 2018
Approved for use in South East London by:

Review date: August 2020

South East London Area Prescribing Committee. A partnership between NHS organisations in South East London: Bexley/ Bromley/ Greenwich/ Lambeth/ Lewisham & Southwark Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) & GSTFT/KCH/SLAM/Oxleas NHS Foundation Trusts & Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Trust