



Pharmaceutical Services, 2 Franklin Street, Belfast BT2 8DQ  
Telephone No. 028 95 36 0333

To: All Community Pharmacists

28<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Dear colleague

**Medicine Supply Notification: Levofloxacin 250mg and 500mg tablets**  
**Tier 2 – medium impact**

[Medicines Supply Tool – SPS - Specialist Pharmacy Service – The first stop for professional medicines advice](#)

## Summary

- Levofloxacin 250mg tablets are in limited supply until late April 2025.
- Levofloxacin 500mg tablets are in limited supply until late May 2025.
- Alternative antibiotics remain available and can support increased demand (see supporting information).
- Where alternative antibiotics are not suitable, unlicensed supplies of levofloxacin tablets may be sourced, lead times vary.

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#### Clinicians should:

- prioritise remaining supplies of levofloxacin 250mg and 500mg tablets for patients with severe pneumonia and a severe penicillin allergy;
- consider prescribing an alternative antibiotic in line with NICE Guidance (see supporting information) for the treatment of low or moderate severity pneumonia in patients with a penicillin allergy;
- consider prescribing ciprofloxacin for patients with pyelonephritis or bacterial prostatitis where levofloxacin tablets are unavailable; and
- prescribe unlicensed levofloxacin tablets only where licensed alternatives are not appropriate, lead times vary.

If the above options are not considered appropriate, advice should be sought from microbiology teams on alternative management options.

When prescribing alternative antibiotics, prescribers should consider penicillin allergy severity, indication, Gram positive/negative coverage, pregnancy status, and local prescribing guidelines.

## Actions Required

## Supporting information

### Clinical Information

Levofloxacin is used in the treatment of patients with severe pneumonia who are penicillin allergic and for pyelonephritis or bacterial prostatitis.

In patients with low to moderate severity pneumonia who are penicillin allergic, clinicians should refer to NICE guidance NG138 on antibiotic prescribing for [community acquired](#) pneumonia and NG139 on antibiotic prescribing for [hospital acquired](#) pneumonia.

### Alternative fluoroquinolones

Moxifloxacin has an overlapping spectrum with levofloxacin, except for *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* cover where levofloxacin has some activity, but moxifloxacin does not.



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Ciprofloxacin also has an overlapping spectrum with levofloxacin except for Gram-positive organisms such as *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Streptococcus pneumoniae* where levofloxacin is active, but ciprofloxacin is not. If ciprofloxacin is being offered as an alternative, Gram-positive cover should be added where relevant (e.g. for community-acquired pneumonia).

#### Links to further information

[SmPC levofloxacin](#)

[BNF quinolones](#)

[BNF levofloxacin](#)

[SmPC ciprofloxacin](#)

[BNF Respiratory system infections, antibacterial therapy treatment summary](#)

[NICE NG138 Pneumonia \(community-acquired\): antimicrobial prescribing](#)

[NICE NG138 Pneumonia \(community-acquired\): antimicrobial prescribing – visual summary](#)

[NICE NG139 Pneumonia \(hospital-acquired\): antimicrobial prescribing](#)

[NICE NG139 Pneumonia \(hospital-acquired\): antimicrobial prescribing – visual summary](#)

#### Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed levofloxacin 250mg and 500mg tablets. Please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies:

- Alium
- Smartway

Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine must consider the relevant guidance and NHS Trust or local governance procedures. Unlicensed imports do not undergo any central quality assessment or suitability evaluation. Therefore, any import must be locally assessed in line with local unlicensed medicines processes.

Please see the links below for further information:

- [The supply of unlicensed medicinal products](#), Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
- [Professional Guidance for the Procurement and Supply of Specials](#), Royal Pharmaceutical Society



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- [Prescribing unlicensed medicines](#), General Medical Council (GMC),

When prescribing a product that is not licensed in the UK due to a supply issue with the licensed alternative prescribers must indicate on the HS21 prescription that an unlicensed product is required, with the following wording: “**special order**”.