

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

Medicine Supply Notification: Buprenorphine (Relevtec®) 35micrograms/hour, 52.5micrograms/hour, 70micrograms/hour transdermal patches
Buprenorphine (Bupeaze®) 52.5micrograms/hour transdermal patches

Tier 2 – medium impact

Date of issue: 19/06/2025

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

Summary

- Buprenorphine (Relevtec®) 35micrograms/hour, 52.5micrograms/hour and 70micrograms/hour transdermal patches are out of stock until early August 2025.
- Buprenorphine (Bupeaze®) 52.5micrograms/hour transdermal patches are out of stock until early October 2025.
- Relevtec® and Bupeaze® are matrix formulation 4-day (96-hourly) transdermal patches.
- Alternative buprenorphine matrix formulation 4-day (96-hourly) patches remain available (Bupeaze® [35micrograms/hour and 70micrograms/hour strengths remain available], Carlosafine®, and Transtec®) and can support increased demand.

Actions Required

Prescribers should not initiate patients on Relevtec® 35micrograms/hour, 52.5micrograms/hour and 70micrograms/hour or Bupeaze® 52.5micrograms/hour transdermal patches until the supply issues have resolved.

Where patients have insufficient supplies to last until the re-supply dates, clinicians should:

- review patients and consider prescribing an alternative brand of buprenorphine matrix formulation 4-day (96-hourly) transdermal patch that is available including: Bupeaze® (35micrograms/hour and 70micrograms/hour remain available), Carlosafine®, and Transtec® (see Supporting information);
- ensure patients stay on the same strength patch;
- ensure patients stay on 4-day (96-hourly) patches where possible;
- monitor and clinically assess the patient's response and titrate dose if required; and
- ensure patients are counselled on the change in brand and are not intolerant to any of the patch excipients (see Supporting information).

Supporting information

Clinical Information

Buprenorphine 4-day (96-hourly) transdermal patches are licensed in adults for treatment of moderate to severe cancer pain and severe pain which does not respond to non-opioid analgesics.

They are available as matrix formulations (drug embedded in an adhesive matrix with the release rate determined by the physical properties of the matrix).

Buprenorphine patches are available in lots of different strengths and durations of action (72-hourly, 96-hourly and 7-day). The BNF contains information about the safe prescribing and dispensing of buprenorphine patches. Prescribers and dispensers must ensure that the correct preparation is prescribed and dispensed. To avoid confusion and errors, it is recommended that all buprenorphine patches are prescribed by brand name.

CAUTION: Prescribers should be aware that Hapoctasin® is a 3-day (72-hourly) formulation buprenorphine patch which is available in the same strengths as Relevtec® and Bupeaze® (e.g. 35micrograms/hour, 52.5micrograms/hour, 70micrograms/hour). This may increase the risk of product mis-selection when prescribing and dispensing. Care should be taken to switch patients from Relevtec® or Bupeaze® to an equivalent strength of an alternative brand and ensure it is a 4-day formulation patch.

When prescribing an alternative brand of buprenorphine patch, the summary of product characteristics (SmPC) should be consulted for cautions, contraindications and excipients, as these may vary between products.

Links to further information

[SmPC Relevtec® patches](#)

[SmPC Bupeaze® patches](#)

[SmPC Carlosafine® patches](#)

[SmPC Transtec® patches](#)

[BNF Buprenorphine](#)

[Buprenorphine patches | Right Decisions](#)

[HSCNI - Items Unsuitable for Generic Prescribing](#)

[SPS- Using transdermal patches safely in healthcare settings](#)