



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

To: All Community Pharmacists

25th February 2026

Dear colleague

Medicine Supply Notification:
Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free
Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension
Tier 2 – medium impact

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

Summary

- Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free will be out of stock from mid-March until June 2026.
- Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension is out of stock; resupply date is to be confirmed.
- Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg and 160mg/800mg tablets remain available and can support increased demand.
- Unlicensed supplies of co-trimoxazole oral suspension may be sourced, lead times vary.



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ACTIONS REQUIRED

Until supply issues resolve, clinicians/prescribers in primary and secondary care should:

- reserve remaining supplies of co-trimoxazole oral suspensions for patients with enteral feeding tubes or on part doses not deliverable by co-trimoxazole tablets;
- in all other patients requiring co-trimoxazole, consider prescribing co-trimoxazole tablets, using either half a tablet or a full tablet to deliver the required dose; tablets may be crushed (see Supporting Information)
- consider prescribing unlicensed co-trimoxazole oral suspension only where licensed alternatives are not available. Prescribers should work with local pharmacy teams to ensure orders are placed within appropriate time frames as lead times may vary.

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

Supporting information

Clinical Information

Use of co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg or 160mg/800mg strength tablets:

- For a 40mg/200mg dose give HALF of a co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg tablet (off-label manipulation)
- If the patient is unable to swallow tablets, they may be crushed and mixed in a small amount of water/apple puree/soft food before administration (off-label manipulation)
- For patients on enteral feeding tubes there is an increased risk of tube blockage if crushed/dispersed tablets are used so this is not recommended



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Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed co-trimoxazole oral suspension.

Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml and 80mg/400mg/5ml preparations have been sourced, please confirm with importer if a particular formulation type is required, for example sugar free formulation.

(Please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):

- Alcatia Pharma
- Alium Medical
- Genetech Pharmaceuticals
- Mawdsleys Unlicensed
- Tanner Pharma
- Target Healthcare

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) [The supply of unlicensed medicinal products special GN14.pdf](#)
- Professional Guidance for the Procurement and Supply of Specials, Royal Pharmaceutical Society [specials-professional-guidance.pdf](#)
- Prescribing unlicensed medicines, General Medical Council (GMC) [Prescribing unlicensed medicines - professional standards - 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”

[Links to further information:](#)



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- SmPC - Co-trimoxazole 40mg/200mg/5ml oral suspension [Co-Trimoxazole 40 mg/200 mg per 5 ml Paediatric Suspension - Summary of Product Characteristics \(SmPC\) - \(emc\) | 6994](#)
 - SmPC - Co-trimoxazole 80mg/400mg/5ml oral suspension [Co-Trimoxazole 80 mg/400 mg per 5 ml Adult Suspension - Summary of Product Characteristics \(SmPC\) - \(emc\) | 6996](#)
 - SmPC – Co-trimoxazole tablets [Search Results - \(emc\)](#)
- BNF – Co-trimoxazole [Co-trimoxazole | Drugs | BNF | NICE](#)