

**Dr Keith Ridge**  
**Chief Pharmaceutical Officer**

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Dear Colleague

**Shortage of Isosorbide Mononitrate 10mg, 20mg and 40mg tablets**

Because of problems with the availability of raw materials, there is currently a shortage of all normal release isosorbide mononitrate presentations:

- Isosorbide mononitrate 10mg tablets
- Isosorbide mononitrate 20mg tablets
- Isosorbide mononitrate 40mg tablets

The shortage of this medicine may last for several months and current information indicates that normal supply is unlikely to resume before the end of April 2013. However, as with other medicine supply problems, the situation may change from week to week. We understand, for example, that some companies may obtain some stock before that time, while others are importing unlicensed isosorbide mononitrate for use on an individual patient basis

In the absence of normal release isosorbide mononitrate tablets being available, clinicians are advised to consider substitution with a slow release mononitrate preparation (which are not affected by this supply problem). Limited data exists regarding switching from normal release to modified release tablets but initially a mg per mg substitution would be appropriate (i.e. same daily dose overall) in most patients, and where available formulations allow. Because information on the dose equivalence of these products is uncertain, clinical oversight to consider further dose adjustment is advised. If any clinician has concern about prescribing for a particular patient, consultant cardiological advice should be sought.

Community pharmacists presented with prescriptions for the normal release presentations, who are unable to obtain stock, should refer patients back to their prescriber so that an appropriate alternative can be prescribed. Where the prescriber intends for an unlicensed product to be supplied, the prescription will need to be written in a way that makes this clear.

The Department of Health is monitoring the situation closely and is continuing to work with suppliers to ensure this problem is resolved as soon as possible.

If you have any queries please contact: Isabelle Izzard at [isabelle.izzard@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:isabelle.izzard@dh.gsi.gov.uk) or Joseph Smith at [joseph.smith@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:joseph.smith@dh.gsi.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

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**Dr Keith Ridge**  
**Chief Pharmaceutical Officer**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Huon Gray', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Professor Huon Gray**  
**Interim National Clinical Director for Heart Disease**