



## NEW MEDICINES

### Revlimid

**COMPOSITION:** Lenalidomide.  
**PRESENTATION:** Hard capsule.  
**ACTION:** Anti-neoplastic, anti-angiogenic, pro-erythropoietic and immunomodulatory  
**INDICATIONS:** In combination with dexamethasone for the treatment of multiple myeloma in patients who have received at least one prior therapy.  
**DOSAGE:** Capsules should be taken at the same time each day. The recommended starting dose is 25mg once daily on days 1–21 of repeated 28-day cycles. Dose adjustments are recommended to manage grade 3 or 4 neutropenia or thrombocytopenia, or other grade 3 or 4 toxicity judged to be related to lenalidomide.  
**CONTRAINDICATIONS:** Patients under 18 years of age. Pregnant women. Women of childbearing age (unless all the pregnancy prevention programme conditions outlined in the summary of product characteristics are met). Patients with Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption.  
**PRECAUTIONS:** For elderly patients and those with impaired renal function, care should be taken in dose selection and renal function should be monitored. Dose adjustments should be made based on patients' renal function. Erythropoietic agents (or other agents that may increase the risk of thrombosis, such as hormone replacement therapy) should be used with caution in multiple myeloma patients receiving lenalidomide with dexamethasone. A haemoglobin concentration above 13g/dl should lead to discontinuation of erythropoietic agents. Patients and physicians should be alert to signs and symptoms of thromboembolism. Patients should seek medical care if they develop symptoms such as shortness of breath, chest pain, or arm or leg swelling. Prophylactic antithrombotic medicines should be recommended, especially in patients with additional thrombotic risk factors. Patients should be advised to report febrile episodes promptly. Patients and physicians should be alert to signs and symptoms of bleeding, including petechiae and epistaxes. A complete blood cell count should be performed at baseline, every week for the first eight weeks of treatment and monthly thereafter to monitor for cytopenias. Co-administration of lenalidomide with other

myelosuppressive agents should be undertaken with caution.  
**SIDE EFFECTS:** Very common (>1/10) neutropenia, thrombocytopenia, anaemia, constipation, diarrhoea, nausea, weight change, rash, muscle cramp, muscle weakness, fatigue, asthenia, peripheral oedema, insomnia.  
**LEGAL CATEGORY:** POM.  
**NET PRICE:** 21 × 5mg, £3,570; 21 × 10mg, £3,780; 21 × 15mg, £3,969; 21 × 25mg, £4,368.  
**CONTACT DETAILS:** Celgene, 8 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB11 1FW (tel 08448 010045).

### Sebivo

**COMPOSITION:** Telbivudine.  
**PRESENTATION:** Film-coated tablet.  
**CLASS:** Thymidine nucleoside analogue.  
**INDICATIONS:** Treatment of chronic hepatitis B in adult patients with compensated liver disease and evidence of viral replication, persistently elevated serum alanine aminotransferase levels and histological evidence of active inflammation or fibrosis.  
**DOSAGE:** 600mg once daily.  
**PRECAUTIONS:** Adjustment of the dosage interval is required in renal impairment. After initiating antiviral therapy, serum alanine aminotransferase may increase in some patients as hepatitis B virus DNA levels decline. Patients with cirrhosis may be at higher risk for hepatic decompensation and hepatitis exacerbation, and should be monitored during therapy. Sebivo is not indicated for patients with decompensated cirrhosis. Exacerbations of hepatitis have been reported in patients who have stopped treatment, and hepatic function should therefore be monitored for at least six months after discontinuation. Nucleoside analogues should be

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## RECALLED PRODUCTS

### Amoxicillin

Chatfield branded amoxicillin suspensions and Dedoxil branded amoxicillin capsules are being recalled by Chatfield and DDSA Pharmaceuticals. This follows concerns about the quality of the active ingredient used in their manufacture. These batches may be in Genesis Pharmaceuticals livery. The Dedoxil brand identity is only visible on the capsules of the inner packs.

#### Chatfield branded amoxicillin suspensions

Product	Expiry date	Batch number
125mg/5ml	August 2007	All batches
250mg/5ml	August 2007	All batches

#### Dedoxil branded amoxicillin capsules

Product	Expiry date	Batch number
250mg × 21	On or before May 2009	All batches
250mg × 500	On or before May 2009	All batches
500mg × 21	On or before May 2009	All batches
500mg × 100	On or before May 2009	All batches

Recipients are requested to quarantine any remaining stock and return it to their supplier for credit. For further information and other enquiries contact 020 7835 5990.

used with caution for any patient with hepatomegaly, hepatitis or other known risk factors for liver disease. Evidence does not support the use of telbivudine monotherapy for patients with established lamivudine-resistant hepatitis B infection.

**SIDE EFFECTS:** Common (>1/100, <1/10) dizziness, headache, cough, diarrhoea, nausea, abdominal pain, rash, fatigue, increased blood amylase, increased blood lipase, increased blood creatine phosphokinase, increased blood alanine aminotransferase.

**LEGAL CATEGORY:** POM.

**NET PRICE:** 28 × 600mg, £290.33.

**CONTACT DETAILS:** Novartis Pharmaceuticals UK Ltd, Frimley Business Park, Frimley, Surrey GU16 7SR (tel 01276 698370).

## SPC CHANGES

### Femara

Femara (letrozole; Novartis) is now contraindicated for premenopausal, pregnant or lactating women and patients with severe hepatic impairment. Pre-operative use is now contraindicated for patients whose breast cancer receptor status is negative or unknown.

## PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

### Atenolol

Atenolol oral solution 25mg/5ml is now available from Orbis Consumer Products. Net price: 300ml, £8.45. Legal category: POM.

## DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

### Orthoforms

Janssen-Cilag will discontinue Orthoforms (nonoxynol-9) pessaries 5 per cent at the end of June. Further information on 01494 567567.

### Vepesid

Bristol-Myers Squibb has discontinued Vepesid (etoposide) injection 10mg/5ml. Vepesid capsules 50mg and 100mg remain available. Medical information on 0800 7311736.

## RESOURCES

### Chief pharmacist forum

An internet forum for primary care chief pharmacists in Scotland has been launched by the National Pharmacy Association. The NPA hopes the forum will be used by chief pharmacists to share best practice and pose questions on policy implementation. Further information is available at [www.npa.co.uk/forum](http://www.npa.co.uk/forum).

## FUTURE EVENTS

### Hypertension

One-day meeting, "Hypertension for nurses and pharmacists", providing an update on the causes, prevention and treatment of high blood pressure, St George's Hospital, London, 18 September. Cost £50. Further information from Nirmala Markandu on 020 8725 2989 (e-mail [ppitts@sgul.ac.uk](mailto:ppitts@sgul.ac.uk)).