Therapeutics Advisory Group

Improving lives together
Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System

Primary Care Prescribing Guidance
Metolazone Use in Adults
November 2023 version 2.0

Key Message

Commissioning of the licensed product Xaqua® (metolazone) 5mg tablets has been discussed and classified as **ADVICE - Specialist advice required from primary or secondary care clinician with relevant expertise prior to primary care initiation** for restricted use across Norfolk and Waveney.

Please see Netformulary for further information.

NOTE: Xaqua® tablets are not directly interchangeable with other metolazone products due to higher bioavailability, which may differ significantly (up to~ 2-fold)

As per the SPC, a 5mg Xaqua® tablet can be halved to make a 2.5mg Xaqua® dose.

All communication related to metolazone, including 'transfer of care' documents **MUST** clearly state the product provided, dose and follow up.

Background Information

Patients reaching the clinical point when they need metolazone treatment will usually have been under the secondary care consultant cardiologist, renal team and/or community heart failure team for some time. The decision to treat with this specialist treatment will either be made by the community heart failure team or by secondary care cardiologists or nephrologist.

Sanofi-Aventis discontinued the UK licensed metolazone preparation in 2012. Metolazone was formerly only commissioned in Norfolk and Waveney as an unlicensed special order imported product.

Within Norfolk and Waveney, the drug is used routinely in cardiology for add-on therapy for acute decompensated heart failure for oedema resistant to high dose IV furosemide (and in combination with oral loop diuretics, either short-term or long-term in severe/end-stage heart failure when the loop diuretic is not controlling congestive symptoms sufficiently). It is also routinely used by renal physicians for oedema related to renal dysfunction.

Dose, side effects and interactions

Information on dose, side effects, interactions, safety and local commissioning can be found at the following links:

Metolazone BNF information

Xaqua® SPC information

Norfolk and Waveney Netformulary

MHRA Drug Safety advice

SPC guidance

Xaqua® (metolazone) 5mg tablets

Xaqua® (metolazone) 5mg tablets recently launched in the UK. This preparation is licensed for:

- Oedema related to kidney diseases, including the nephrotic syndrome and states of impaired renal function, in addition to Oedema related to congestive heart failure.
- Mild and moderate hypertension, alone or in combination with other antihypertensive medicines of a different class.

Now that a licensed metolazone product has become commercially available in the UK, in line with MHRA recommendation, it should be prescribed.

Advice to Prescribers in Primary Care

Inititation for NEW patients

- Prescribe by **licensed brand Xaqua®**
- Ensure clear documentation in communications and patient record of product and dose.

Caution: *generic prescribing may result in an unlicensed product being dispensed and lower than intended dose due to reduced bioavailability*

EXISTING patients – *check which product patient is currently taking*

- **Switch from unlicensed metolazone preparations to Xaqua®** *(can be done in primary care)*
- See prescribing advice: British Society for Heart Failure. MHRA Metolazone Drug Safety
- A dose adjustment may be necessary. Individualised titration based on patient's response and tolerability is advised. *Contact specialist for advice if any doubt / concerns*
- **The switch** should be carefully managed, with clear documentation of the change made, intended brand to be used, dose, frequency and arrangements for monitoring and follow up.
- **Patients should be closely monitored to assess clinical impact of the switch**
- **Arrangements for monitoring should be done on an individual basis** after an assessment of clinical risk.
- **Check serum electrolytes at regular intervals** and observe for clinical signs of fluid and/or electrolyte imbalance
- **Communicate all information related to the change to all health care professionals** involved in the patient's care including the dispensing pharmacy / dispensary, patient and/or their carer as appropriate
- **Ensure the patient / carer is made aware of the intended brand, dose, frequency and arrangements for monitoring.** Give advice:
  - to support the handling of part tablets or alternate day dosing.
  - on symptoms of excessive or sub optimal dosing and **when to contact a healthcare professional**
  - to check product dispensed is as per the intended brand

Unlicensed metolazone	**Licensed Xaqua®** (metolazone)
2.5mg	Check with specialist for advice
5mg	2.5mg - prescribed as 5mg tablets - *take half a 5mg tablet (2.5mg)*
10mg	5mg
Approximate dose equivalence : please check with specialist if unsure	

Community Pharmacy

Please ensure that the metolazone product and dose is what the patient is expecting.

Contact details

For further advice and guidance, please contact Dr Grahame-Clarke, Consultant Cardiologist, at NNUH cairistine.grahame-clark@nnuh.nhs.uk

Document history:

Version	Date	Author / Editor	Status	Comment
0.1	Feb 2023	Marion Sully – Project Lead Pharmacist, Jen Carroll, TAG Lead Technician – NHS N+W	Draft	Draft presented for comment
1.0	Feb 2023	As above	Final	Updated following comments from senior team
2.0	Nov 2023	Jen Carroll, TAG Lead Technician, NWICB	Final	Review date updated ready for transfer to new KNoW website