DOMPERIDONE-CONTAINING MEDICINES: REMINDER OF THE RISK OF CARDIAC ADVERSE REACTIONS—RESTRICTED INDICATION, CONTRAINDICATIONS AND REDUCED DOSE AND DURATION OF USE

In 2014 a European-wide review recommended restrictions on the use of domperidone-containing medicines following an evaluation of the benefits and risks of domperidone. This review was triggered due to concerns regarding cardiac adverse effects associated with domperidone use.

After evaluation of available evidence on the efficacy and safety of domperidone from various sources (non-clinical and clinical, published and unpublished), the review confirmed that there was a small increased risk of serious cardiac adverse effects associated with the use of domperidone, including QT prolongation, torsades de pointes, ventricular arrhythmia and sudden cardiac arrest. This risk was higher in patients > 60 years, adults taking daily oral doses of >30 mg and those concomitantly taking QT prolonging medicines or CYP3A4 inhibitors. The review concluded that the benefit-risk profile remains positive in the treatment of nausea and vomiting, when there is adherence to the risk minimisation measures set out in the product information.

Domperidone should be used at the lowest effective dose for the shortest possible duration (not exceeding 1 week). The maximum recommended dose of domperidone in adults is 10 mg orally up to 3 times daily or 30 mg twice daily as suppositories. The recommended dose of domperidone for children is 0.25mg/kg bodyweight up to 3 times daily orally (oral suspensions should be given in adapted graduated oral syringes).

Domperidone is contraindicated in patients with moderate or severe hepatic impairment, conditions where cardiac conduction is, or could be, impaired, and in patients with underlying cardiac disease. Co-administration with QT prolonging medicines or potent CYP3A4 inhibitors is also contraindicated.

Healthcare Professionals are reminded of the following advice to support the safe and appropriate use of domperidone:

Reminder of restricted indication
• The use of domperidone is restricted to the relief of symptoms of nausea and vomiting.

Reminder of contraindications
Domperidone should not be used in:
• patients with conditions where cardiac conduction is, or could be, impaired,
• patients with underlying cardiac diseases such as congestive heart failure,
• patients receiving other medications known to prolong QT interval or potent CYP3A4 inhibitors, and
• patients with moderate to severe hepatic impairment.

Reminder of the restrictions on dose

Oral formulations
• For adults and adolescents over 12 years of age and weighing 35 kg or more, the recommended maximum dose in 24 hours is 60 mg (dose interval: 30 mg twice a day).
• In children under 12 years of age and weighing less than 35 kg, the recommended maximum dose in 24 hours is 0.75 mg/kg body weight (dose interval: 0.25 mg/kg body weight up to three times a day).
• In order to accurately measure doses to paediatric patients, oral suspensions should be given using an adapted graduated oral syringe.

Suppository formulation
• Suppositories should only be used in adults and adolescents weighing 35 kg or more, the recommended maximum daily dose in 24 hours is 60 mg (dose interval: 30 mg twice a day).
• Note: there are currently no suppository formulations of domperidone authorised in Ireland.

Reminder of the duration of treatment
• Domperidone should be used at the lowest effective dose for the shortest possible duration.
• The maximum treatment duration should not usually exceed one week.
• Patients currently receiving long-term treatment with domperidone should be reassessed at a routine appointment to advise on treatment continuation, dose change, or cessation.

Key Message
Domperidone is associated with a small increased risk of serious cardiac adverse effects. HCPs are reminded of the following risk minimisation measures:

Therapeutic Indications: Use of domperidone is restricted to the relief of symptoms of nausea and vomiting.

Contraindications: Domperidone is contraindicated in patients who have known existing prolongation of cardiac conduction intervals, particularly QTc, in patients with significant electrolyte disturbances or underlying cardiac diseases such as congestive heart failure, in patients who are concomitantly taking QT-prolonging drugs or potent CYP3A4 inhibitors (regardless of their QT prolonging effects) and in patients who have moderate or severe hepatic impairment.

Dose and duration of use: HCPs should adhere to the dose and duration of use for adults, adolescents and children recommended in the Summary of Product Characteristics. Patients >60 years of age should consult a Healthcare Professional before taking domperidone. Domperidone should be used at the lowest effective dose for the shortest duration necessary. The maximum treatment period should not usually exceed one week.

*Products currently authorised in Ireland include Motilium and Domerid. Further details are available at www.hpra.ie