



*Dorset
Clinical Commissioning Group*

YOUR MEDICINES

Why there might be changes



Supporting people in Dorset to lead healthier lives

Why are there changes to my medicines?

Changes to your medicines may be necessary for many reasons, including:

- New safety concerns
- New evidence about the benefits or risks of taking a drug
- New treatment guidelines
- Using a generic form of a medicine



Types of changes to medicines

Class switches

There may be several different drugs in the same group of medicines. When there is no difference in how effective the different drugs are, the cheapest drug in the group should be used.

Isomers

Sometimes a particular drug is available as a slightly different chemical form (called an “isomer”).

Usually there is no advantage

with using the isomer although it may be considerably more expensive.

Dose Changes

Sometimes a low strength of a medicine is prescribed twice a day. It is often just as effective, more convenient and less expensive to prescribe a higher strength once daily.

Generic Switches

All medicines have a “brand name” (or trade name) and a “generic name” (drug name). For example, paracetamol is the generic name for

a widely used pain killer. “Panadol[®]” is the name one company gives to its own brand of paracetamol. Generic medicines usually cost a lot less than their equivalent branded medicine.

Tablets and Capsules

Sometimes the same medicine may be available as both tablets and capsules. If there is a difference in cost, we will recommend that the less expensive product is prescribed.

Brand Switches

Sometimes it is important that patients receive a particular brand of a medicine. If such medicines are prescribed by the generic name we will try to switch to prescribing the brand.

What should I do if I am worried about a change in the appearance or name of my medicine?

Doctors and pharmacists can tell you more about any

changes to your medicines. Discuss any worries or concerns with your doctor or pharmacist.

Summary

It is important that we make best use of the money we spend on medicines, without reducing the quality of the treatment patients receive.

If more money is spent on medicines than is available, the extra money has to come from other areas of healthcare. The changes described in this leaflet can save the NHS millions of pounds.

Making changes to your medicines does not mean that you are receiving a reduced quality service.

Generic medicines are NOT inferior to branded medicines.

All medicines are produced by companies who are subject to tight controls on quality.

Further information

If you have any questions relating your medicines, or would like more information, please contact your GP surgery or ask your community pharmacist (chemist).

Alternatively, the NHS choices website at www.nhs.uk has lots of reliable medicines related information

**This leaflet can be made available in other
formats and languages**

To request a different format please contact the
Communications Team

communications@dorsetccg.nhs.uk

