

National Supply Issues of Prolonged Release Methylphenidate Tablets Medicines for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Information for patients and carers.

There is a national supply problem affecting prolonged release methylphenidate tablets used to help manage symptoms of ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). This is a UK wide issue which is affecting all services across the country and pharmacies in both the community and in hospitals. While every effort will be made by your healthcare professionals to ensure a timely supply of your medication, there may be a need for your normal medicine(s) to be changed or temporarily stopped due to the ongoing supply problems.

Why is there a shortage?

The supply shortage of these medicines is caused by manufacturing issues and also an increased global demand (increased prescribing of ADHD medication).

How long will the shortage last?

The medicines are expected back in stock later this year. These dates are indicative only and are subject to change.

What medicines are affected?

Methylphenidate prolonged-release tablets (brand names: Affenid[®] XL, Concerta[®] XL, Delmosart[®] XL, Matoride[®] XL, Xaggitin[®] XL and Xenidate[®] XL)

Are there alternative medicines available?

There are no direct alternatives available. For some people, changing to a different dose, preparation type or medication might be appropriate, but this must be recommended by the specialist service who usually review your ADHD medication.

What should I do if I cannot get my ADHD prescription from the pharmacy?

Your community pharmacy and GP practice will work together to support you during this period of medicine shortages. The availability of stock is a live situation, and is changeable, so what the help looks like will depend both on the medication you require and the timing of your request.

As this is a UK wide issue, all community pharmacies are experiencing the same difficulties in getting supplies. As such you should not contact multiple pharmacies relating to medicine supplies.

Where a suitable alternative ADHD medicine is available you may be required to take a lower dose or different type (e.g., tablets instead of capsules) for the duration of the shortage.

Where your prescribed medication or a suitable alternative cannot be sourced, a break in treatment may need to be considered as an option. This will be undertaken in agreement with your healthcare professional representatives and would be for the duration of the medicine supply issues only.

Is it safe to stop taking ADHD medicines suddenly?

Treatment guidelines for ADHD recommend, under medical guidance, having regular treatment breaks from ADHD medicines. This means stopping your medicine to see if you still need to take it. This does not mean that you cannot restart it in the future, when supplies are available.

You should not experience any harm from stopping methylphenidate suddenly. These medicines can be stopped at weekends or during school holidays to preserve supplies where an alternative cannot be sourced.

Non-medicine strategies for managing ADHD symptoms

Below are some recommended strategies that may help reduce the impact of ADHD on your day-to-day life. These strategies should be used every day, as well as taking your ADHD medicine. However, they may be especially helpful to think about if your ADHD medicine is unavailable. These include:

- Changing lighting and noise
- Reducing distractions
- Making changes to education or work to have shorter times of focus and having movement breaks
- Using notes, checklists and diaries/ planners
- Increasing exercise, especially outside in nature

Details of UK/ local support groups and charities

- <https://www.ukaan.org/support-groups>
- <https://www.scottishadhdcoalition.org/local-groups-in-scotland/>
- <https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/>