PLEASE READ

IMPORTANT MEDICINE SAFETY INFORMATION

APPROVED BY THE HPRA

An tÚdarás Rialála Táirgí Sláinte
Health Products Regulatory Authority

9th February 2024

Pseudoephedrine – Risks of posterior reversible encephalopathy syndrome (PRES) and reversible cerebral vasoconstriction syndrome (RCVS)

Dear Healthcare professional,

Marketing authorisation holders of pseudoephedrine-containing medicines in agreement with the European Medicines Agency and the Health Products Regulatory Authority would like to inform you of the following:

Summary

- **Few cases of posterior reversible encephalopathy syndrome (PRES) and reversible cerebral vasoconstriction syndrome (RCVS) have been reported with the use of pseudoephedrine-containing medicines.**
- **Pseudoephedrine-containing medicines are contraindicated in patients with severe or uncontrolled hypertension, or with severe acute or chronic kidney disease or renal failure, as these conditions increase the risks of PRES or RCVS.**
- **Symptoms of PRES and RCVS include sudden severe headache or thunderclap headache, nausea, vomiting, confusion, seizures and/or visual disturbances.**
- **Patients should be advised to immediately stop using these medicines and seek medical assistance if signs or symptoms of PRES or RCVS develop.**

Background on the safety concern

Pseudoephedrine is authorised, alone or in combination with other substances, for short-term symptomatic relief of nasal or sinus congestion caused by the common cold or allergic rhinitis or vasomotor rhinitis or aerotitis.

Cases of posterior reversible encephalopathy syndrome (PRES) and reversible cerebral vasoconstriction syndrome (RCVS), which are serious conditions affecting the cerebral blood vessels, have been reported in patients taking pseudoephedrine-containing medicines. Most reported cases resolved following discontinuation and appropriate treatment. No fatal cases of PRES or RCVS have been reported.

Following an EU-wide review of reported cases and other available data to evaluate the risks of PRES and RCVS with pseudoephedrine-containing medicines, it has been concluded that pseudoephedrine is associated with risks of PRES and RCVS and that the product information should be updated to include information on these adverse reactions and measures to reduce the risks.
The newly identified risks of PRES or RCVS should be considered in the context of the overall safety profile of pseudoephedrine, which also includes other cardiovascular and cerebrovascular ischaemic events.

Overview of PRES and RCVS

PRES can manifest with a wide variety of acute or subacute neurological symptoms, including headache, mental status alteration, seizures, visual disturbances and/or focal neurologic deficits. An acute or sub-acute onset of the symptoms (hours to days) is typical. PRES is usually reversible;

symptoms cease within several days or weeks with the reduction of blood pressure and withdrawal of causative drugs.

RCVS usually manifests with thunderclap headache (severe pain peaking in seconds), typically bilateral, with posterior onset followed by diffuse pain frequently accompanied by nausea, vomiting, photophobia and phonophobia. Transient focal deficits can be present in some patients. Ischaemic and haemorrhagic stroke are the major complications of the syndrome.

Call for reporting

Please report any suspected adverse reactions associated with the use of pseudoephedrine in accordance with the national requirements via the national spontaneous reporting system, to: HPRA Pharmacovigilance, website: www.hpra.ie

Company contact point

Marketing authorisation holder	**Product licence number**	**Product name**	**Contact point**
Haleon Ireland Ltd.	PA0678/154/001	Robitussin Plus Oral Solution	daniel.e.segelman@haleon.com
	PA0678/147/001	Advil Cold & Flu Coated Tablets	
	PA0678/147/002	Advil Cold & Flu Relief Soft Capsules	
	PA0678/094/001	Panadol Fever and Congestion Film-coated Tablets	
Chefaro Ireland DAC	PA1186/012/001	Solpa-Sinus Film-coated Tablets	Daniel.pinch@perrigo.com
Johnson & Johnson Ireland Ltd.	PA0330/049/001	Actifed 30mg/1.25mg per 5ml Syrup	consumer-gb@kevue.com Freephone: 1800 220044
	PA0330/049/002	Actifed 60mg/2.5mg Tablets	
	PA0330/020/001	Benylin Day & Night Tablets	
	PA0330/028/001	Benylin Four Flu Film-Coated Tablets	
	PA0330/015/002	Benylin Dual Action Dry Syrup	
	PA0330/032/001	Benylin Phlegm Cough plus Decongestant Syrup	
	PA0330/038/001	Non-Drowsy Sinutab Tablets	
	PA0330/057/001	Non-Drowsy Sudafed Decongestant 30mg/5ml Syrup	
	PA0330/057/002	Non-Drowsy Sudafed Decongestant 60 mg Film-Coated Tablets	
	PA0330/039/001	Non-Drowsy Sudaplus Tablets	
	PA0330/056/001	Non-Drowsy Sudapro Head Cold 200mg / 30mg Film-coated Tablets	
Reckitt Ireland Ltd	PA0979/033/001	Nurofen Cold & Flu Film-coated Tablets	Laura.herbert@reckitt.com
	PA0979/065/001	Nurofen Sinus & Pain Film Coated Tablets	
	PA0979/020/001	Lemsip Max Sinus & Flu Hot Lemon Powder for Oral Solution	
Clonmel Healthcare Ltd	PA0126/339/001	Paralief Sinus Tablets	cbooth@clonmel-health.ie
UCB (Pharma) Ireland Limited	PA0891/008/001	Zirtek Plus Decongestant 5mg/120mg Prolonged Release Tablet	UCBCares.IE@ucb.com Freephone: 1800 93 00 75
Rowa Pharmaceuticals Ltd.	PA0074/067/006	Brupro Cold & Flu 200 mg/30 mg film-coated tablets	pv@rowa-pharma.ie

Yours faithfully,

Michael Morris

Mike Morris
Kenvue
Director Medical Affairs, Northern Europe Cluster

The letter is signed on behalf of the marketing authorisation holders listed in the table above.