

Managing the supply issues with Pabrinex® in the treatment of alcohol dependence in primary care

Background

Pabrinex® IV and IM injections are both indicated for rapid therapy of severe depletion or malabsorption of the water-soluble vitamins B and C, particularly in alcohol dependent patients, where a severe depletion of thiamine can lead to Wernicke's encephalopathy ([see NICE CG100 Alcohol use disorders: diagnosis and management of physical complications](#)).

They are also indicated for use after acute infections, post-operatively and in psychiatric states. Pabrinex® IV is used to maintain levels of vitamin B and C in patients on chronic intermittent haemodialysis.

However, recent stock shortages of [intravenous \(IV\) Pabrinex®](#) and the discontinuation of intramuscular (IM) Pabrinex® have affected supplies of injectable vitamin B and C.

[Intramuscular Pabrinex®](#) is currently due to be discontinued on 31st July 2025.

The shortage of Vitamin B and C Intravenous High Potency Solution for injection ampoules has resolved. This generic product is now available however the Pabrinex® brand remains unavailable. A licensed thiamine solution for injection has also become available.

Prescribers should therefore review patient indications and consider what alternatives could be prescribed.

Alternatives

Generic preparations:

A generic vitamins B+C intravenous high potency concentrate for solution for infusion, available via Kent Pharma could be considered as an alternative to Pabrinex® IV and contains the same components as Pabrinex® IV.

Thiamine:

Oral preparations:

Where appropriate, thiamine 50mg and 100mg tablets remain available.

Injectable thiamine:

Intravenous or intramuscular thiamine is an alternative to Pabrinex® that can be used in people at high risk of Wernicke's encephalopathy.

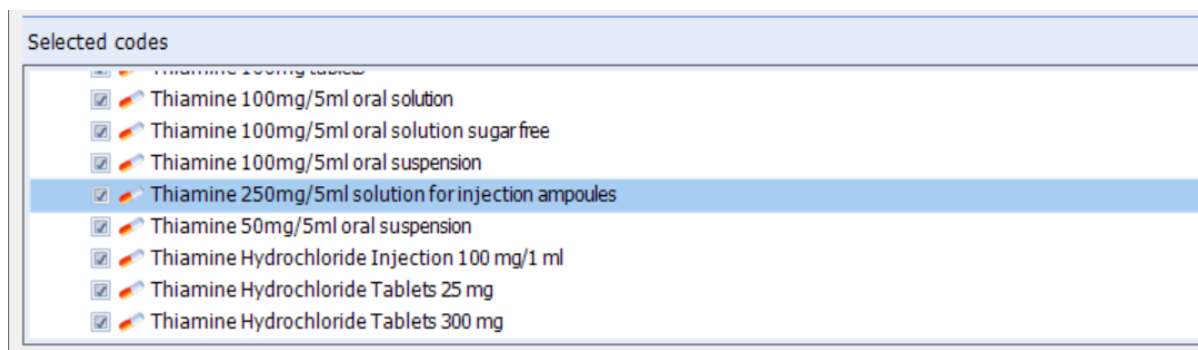
[Thiamine Hydrochloride 50 mg/ml solution](#) for injection is a new licensed product manufactured by Galen Ltd (PL 55469-0002), which can be administered via intramuscular or slow intravenous injection.

This is available to order through AAH: (AAH Code: **THI0351L**) PIP Code: 127 9041

See Specialist Medicines Service (SPS) information on [Using and prescribing thiamine in alcohol dependence – SPS - Specialist Pharmacy Service – The first stop for professional medicines advice](#) and [summary of product characteristics](#) which includes information on

thiamine dosing in a community setting. Please note there are **differences in dosing for community and hospital settings as well as different indications.**

Primary care clinicians can prescribe on EMIS as thiamine 250mg/5ml solution for injection as follows:



Selected codes	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thiamine 100mg/5ml oral solution
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thiamine 100mg/5ml oral solution sugar free
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thiamine 100mg/5ml oral suspension
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Thiamine 250mg/5ml solution for injection ampoules
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thiamine 50mg/5ml oral suspension
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thiamine Hydrochloride Injection 100 mg/1 ml
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thiamine Hydrochloride Tablets 25 mg
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thiamine Hydrochloride Tablets 300 mg

The BNSSG Joint Formulary Group have approved the addition of thiamine injection to the BNSSG Formulary.

Please note that the ICB recommends that a licensed preparation should be used over an unlicensed preparation where clinically appropriate, as unlicensed imports do not undergo any central quality assessment or suitability evaluation.

Useful reference sources:

Specialist Pharmacy Service information

- [Using and prescribing thiamine in alcohol dependence](#)
- [Discontinuation of Pabrinex \(Vitamins B and C\) Intramuscular High Potency Solution for injection ampoules](#)
- [Shortage of Pabrinex \(Vitamins B and C\) Intravenous High Potency Solution for injection ampoules](#)

Remedy – Alcohol misuse <https://remedy.bnssg.icb.nhs.uk/adults/drug-and-alcohol-misuse/alcohol-misuse/>

NICE guidance – CG100, Alcohol-use disorders: diagnosis and management of physical complications

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg100>