

Public Health Link

From the Chief Medical Officer for Wales

Distribution:	As Appendix 1
From:	Andrew Evans, Directorate of Health Policy
Date:	12 February 2018
Reference:	CEM/CPhA/2018/2a
Category:	Action with 48 hours
Title:	Esmya (Ulipristal Acetate) For Uterine Fibroids: Monitor Liver Function In Current And Recent Users; Do Not Initiate Treatment In New Users Or Those Between Treatment Courses
What is this about:	<p>Full details are set out below.</p>
Why has it been sent:	For your information and to pass on to Colleagues

Issue:

This letter is to inform you of temporary safety measures for the medicine Esmya (ulipristal acetate) indicated for pre-operative and intermittent treatment of moderate to severe symptoms of uterine fibroids in adult women of reproductive age. The emergency contraceptive ellaOne also contains ulipristal acetate (single-dose, 30mg). No cases of serious liver injury have been reported with ellaOne and there are no concerns with this medicine at this time.

To: NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership to forward to:

All General practitioners - please ensure this message is seen by all practice nurses and non-principals working in your practice and retain a copy in your 'locum information pack'.

All Community Pharmacists

Deputising services

HB Chief Pharmacists

HB Prescribing Advisers

Independent/Private clinics and Hospitals and Hospices throughout Wales

To: Chief Executives of Health Boards

To: Medical Directors of Health Boards

To: Nurse Directors Health Boards

To: Directors of Public Health

To: Hospital Principals and Chief Pharmacists to action as per alert

cc: Public Health Wales

Consultants in Pharmaceutical Public Health

Chief Executives, NHS Trusts

Principal Pharmacist Welsh Quality Control

Principal Pharmacist Continuing Care Services

Principal Pharmacist Welsh Medicines Information Centre

CSSIW

NHS Direct



9 February 2018

Dear Healthcare Professional

Esmya (ulipristal acetate) for uterine fibroids: monitor liver function in current and recent users; do not initiate treatment in new users or those between treatment courses

I am writing to inform you of new temporary safety measures which have been introduced for Esmya following reports of serious liver injury in women using the medicine for uterine fibroids.

Summary

Five reports of serious liver injury, including four cases of hepatic failure needing liver transplantation, have been reported worldwide in women using Esmya for uterine fibroids. The following temporary safety measures have been introduced while an EU-wide review of the evidence is ongoing:

- Do not initiate new treatment courses of Esmya, including in women who have completed one or more treatment courses previously
- Perform liver function tests at least once a month in all women currently taking Esmya. Stop Esmya treatment in any woman who develops transaminase levels more than 2 times the upper limit of normal, closely monitor and refer for specialist hepatology evaluation as clinically indicated. Liver function tests should be repeated in all women 2 to 4 weeks after stopping treatment.
- Check transaminase levels immediately in current or recent users of Esmya who present with signs or symptoms suggestive of liver injury (such as nausea, vomiting, malaise, right hypochondrial pain, anorexia, asthenia, jaundice). If transaminase levels are more than 2 times the upper limit of normal, stop treatment, closely monitor and refer for specialist hepatology evaluation as clinically indicated.
- Advise women using Esmya on the signs and symptoms of liver injury.

We will provide further information as soon as this review is completed.

The emergency contraceptive ellaOne also contains ulipristal acetate (single-dose, 30mg). No cases of serious liver injury have been reported with ellaOne and there are no concerns with this medicine at this time.



Background

Esmya was first authorised in 2012 for intermittent or pre-operative treatment of moderate to severe symptoms of uterine fibroids in women of reproductive age. Each treatment course of 5mg daily lasts for up to 3 months and may be repeated with breaks between each course.

Approximately 20,400 treatment courses of Esmya were dispensed in the UK between 1 October 2016 and 30 September 2017.¹ To date, we have received 1 suspected adverse drug reaction report of hepatitis with the use of Esmya in the UK.

An EU-wide review of Esmya was started in December 2017 following four reports of serious liver injury (in three cases necessitating liver transplantation) in women using the medicine. Further information about the ongoing review can be found [here](#). The new temporary safety measures have been introduced pending completion of the review following receipt in February 2018 of a further report of hepatic failure requiring liver transplant with Esmya.

Call for reporting

Please report suspected adverse drug reactions to the MHRA through the Yellow Card Scheme:
<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>

Yours faithfully,

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¹ Data derived from IQVIA MIDAS 10/2016-09/2017 by MHRA, January 2018. The usage estimate is based on the assumption that each treatment course was of 3 months duration. The number of courses each woman takes may vary between 1 and 4 courses. The number of courses quoted is a broad estimation and is not therefore equivalent to the number of women who used Esmya.