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சுகாதார அமைச்சு
Ministry of Health

General Circular Number.. 01-22/2022.

All Deputy Director Generals

All Provincial Directors of Health Services,

All Regional Directors of Health Services,

All Directors of Teaching Hospitals, Provincial General Hospitals, District General Hospitals,

All Medical Superintendents of Base Hospitals,

Usage of ethionamide for the shortage of ethambutol

The Technical Support Group (TSG) to the National Programme for Tuberculosis Control and Chest Diseases (NPTCCD) represents speciality bodies and provides evidence-based strategic and technical guidance and recommendation to achieve post-2015 TB control targets (End TB strategies).

Ethambutol 400mg and 100mg tablets used as individual drugs for TB patients are currently not available. Therefore, Technical Support Group meetings held on 30.05.2022 and 24.6.2022 decided to take the following measures.

1. Bridging therapy should be commenced only for TB patients whose lives will be at risk due to Tuberculosis until the standard anti-TB drugs are started and should be prescribed under the strict supervision and monitoring of a Consultant Respiratory Physician.
2. As a temporary measure for the ethambutol shortage, TSG Meeting has suggested to use ethionamide as an alternative drug for a shorter period (three months).
 - Ethionamide is to be prescribed only under the strict guidance and supervision of Consultant Respiratory Physicians with the recommendations mentioned below.

- Indications for use: Bridging therapy & the alternative regimes strictly on Consultant Respiratory physicians advise
- Dose according to the body weight

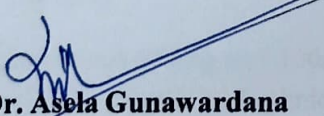
30Kg -35 Kg	36Kg-45Kg	46Kg-55Kg	56Kg-70Kg	>70Kg
500 mg/d	500mg/d	750mg/d	750mg/d	1000mg/d

Ethionamide daily dose is given in two divided doses.

- Ethionamide is safe to be used during breastfeeding.
- Contraindications: Suggest to be avoided during pregnancy as it may worsen nausea, vomiting and in Severe Liver diseases. It has proven teratogenicity in animals and no clear evidence of teratogenicity in humans.
- Paediatric Group: Ethionamide should be best avoided due to its potential adverse effects. The decision to use Ethionamide as a bridging therapy for children should be taken by a Consultant Paediatric Pulmonologist or Consultant Respiratory Physician after considering the risks and benefits carefully. For children who require bridging therapy due to a severe and life-threatening infection, alternative antibiotics such as amikacin or clofazimine could be used.

Once the ethambutol stocks are available standard guidelines should be followed for bridging therapy.

PS: Please note that only a limited stock of ethionamide is available at the Central Drug Stores.


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President, Sri Lanka College of Physicians
President, Sri Lanka College of Microbiologists
President, Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians
District Tuberculosis Control Officers
Chief Pharmacist, Central Drug Stores

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385, வணக்கத்துக்குரியபத்தேகமவிமலவங்சதேரோமாவத்தை,கொழும்பு 10.

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