

Dear Sashi,

Some new information on Vit D. We will be using colecalciferol 20,000 units a week for 12 weeks and then 20000 every 2 weeks for maintenance therapy.

Kind Regards

Ajay Bhatia

>>> Samira Mumani 09/02/2011 18:57 >>>

Dear Consultant/Prescriber Colleagues,

As I am sure you are all aware, there has been a longstanding problem obtaining high dose preparations of Vitamin D to replace the ergocalciferol injection which has not been available for some time.

Approximately a year ago, a source of oral ergocalciferol (50,000 units) from the USA, was obtained and since then, this unlicensed preparation has been the mainstay of our treatment of Vitamin D deficiency states in adults.

Recently, Pharmacy has sourced a supply of oral colecalciferol caps (20,000 units) (Dekristol) available from Germany. Treatment of Vitamin D deficiency using this unlicensed preparation will be considerably more cost-effective than with the ergocalciferol capsules as this preparation is cheaper (£0.36/capsule vs £8.00/capsule) but also because it has been claimed that colecalciferol is approximately 3 times more effective at maintaining serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D levels (NEJM 2007; 357: 266-281) therefore doses required will be less. Dekristol capsules however, contain peanut oil and in rare cases, can cause severe allergic reactions.

We have no remaining stock of the ergocalciferol 50,000 unit capsules but have received a supply of the colecalciferol 20,000 unit capsules. I would therefore ask that future prescriptions for oral high dose Vitamin D are written for the 20,000 unit capsules.

The Imperial College Hospitals NHS Trust guidelines for Vitamin D replacement in adult patients recommend a dose of 20,000 units colecalciferol weekly for 12 weeks as a loading dose to treat a deficiency and then 20,000 units every 2 weeks to maintain sufficiency.

Needless to say, periodic monitoring of vitamin D and calcium levels is necessary.

Please contact me if you have any concerns about this substitution. We will contact you individually to discuss the change of prescriptions already written and not yet filled.

Best wishes

Samira Mumani

Principal Pharmacist

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