



Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2024/018

Formoterol (Oxis[®] 6 Turbohaler) 6micrograms/dose dry powder inhaler

Tier 2 – medium impact*

Date of issue: 12/02/2024

Link: [Medicines Supply Tool](#)

Summary

- Formoterol (Oxis[®] 6 Turbohaler) 6micrograms/dose dry powder inhalers are out of stock until mid-March 2024.
- Formoterol (Oxis[®] 12 Turbohaler) 12micrograms/dose dry powder inhalers remain available and can support increased demand.
- Alternative inhalers remain available and can support increased demand.

Actions Required

Prescribers should not initiate new patients on Oxis[®] 6 Turbohalers until the supply issue resolves.

Where patients have insufficient supplies to last until the re-supply date, clinicians should:

- for patients who are already using budesonide as their inhaled steroid, consider prescribing Symbicort[®] Turbohaler 100/6 or 200/6 inhalation powder, taking into account that the patient's budesonide dose will need to remain the same, and advice and training on the use of the alternative inhaler will need to be provided;
- if the above is not suitable, review patients and consider prescribing Oxis[®] 12 Turbohaler. This may result in a dose increase, but this remains within the licensed dose range at all ages;
- where this is not appropriate, salmeterol 25micrograms/dose or 50micrograms/dose inhalers are available and can be used if clinically appropriate, providing advice and training on the use of the alternative inhaler, taking into consideration that salmeterol is not suitable for patients that use Oxis[®] 6 Turbohalers for immediate relief when required (see BNF for dosing).

Supporting information

Clinical Information

Formoterol is a long-acting beta₂ agonist (LABA). The dose range for Oxis[®] 6 Turbohaler is 6-12 micrograms 1-2 times a day from age 6 years upwards.

*Classification of Tiers can be found at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/a-guide-to-managing-medicines-supply-and-shortages/>

Patients who are using budesonide as their inhaled steroid could be switched to Symbicort[®] Turbohaler 100/6 or 200/6 inhalation powder which contains formoterol in combination with budesonide. If the dose regime lends itself to switching to Symbicort[®], this option maintains the patient on the same device and the same active ingredients. However, clinicians will need to ensure that the budesonide dose being used by the patient will need to be the same as the budesonide dose received from Symbicort[®].

Patients can be switched to an alternative LABA – salmeterol – however retaining patients on Oxis[®] is preferable, even with a dose increase, as there are clinical differences between formoterol and salmeterol. Formoterol has an immediate acting component to its profile whereas salmeterol does not. Salmeterol is also not available as a Turbohaler but as an Accuhaler and a metered-dose inhaler. Education and training would be needed for patients switched to any other inhaler.

[Links to further information](#)

[SmPC Oxis[®] Turbohalers](#)

[SmPC Salmeterol inhalers](#)

[SmPC Symbicort[®] Turbohaler 100/6, Inhalation powder](#)

[SmPC Symbicort[®] Turbohaler 200/6 Inhalation powder](#)

[BNF Formoterol fumarate](#)

[BNF Salmeterol dosing](#)

[NICE guidance: Asthma: diagnosis, monitoring and chronic asthma management](#)

Enquiries

If you have any queries, please contact DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk.