# Oral antihistamines – which are available in lactose-free formulations?

Prepared by UK Medicines Information ([UKMi](http://www.ukmi.nhs.uk/ukmi/about/default.asp?pageRef=1)) pharmacists for NHS healthcare professionals

Before using this Q&A, read the disclaimer at *<https://www.sps.nhs.uk/articles/about-ukmi-medicines-qas/>*

Date prepared: 28th September 2020

## Background

In adults with lactose intolerance, ingestion of lactose may cause gastrointestinal symptoms. Symptoms vary according to the quantity of lactose ingested, the patient’s ability to digest lactose and the amount and type of colonic flora. Lactose is widely used in pharmaceutical formulations as a diluent or carrier. The dose of lactose in most pharmaceuticals is usually less than 2g per day and is unlikely to cause severe gastrointestinal symptoms except in cases of severe lactose intolerance [1].

For patients with severe lactose intolerance, the lactose content of medications should be determined before prescribing. For further information about lactose intolerance and medicines see Medicines Q&A ‘What factors need to be considered when prescribing for lactose intolerant adults?’[1].

## Answer

The table below gives details of lactose free formulations of oral antihistamines. Included are single active constituent preparations that are used for allergic conditions and are listed in the electronic Medicines Compendium (eMC).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Antihistamine** | | **Lactose-free formulation** | **Manufacturer** | | **Ref** |
| **Sedating antihistamines** | | | | | |
| Alimemazine tartrate | Alimemazine Tartrate 7.5mg/5ml Syrup | | | ADVANZ Pharma | [2] |
| Alimemazine Tartrate 7.5mg/5ml Syrup | | | Thame Laboratories | [3] |
| Alimemazine Tartrate 7.5mg/5ml Syrup | | | Zentiva | [4] |
| Alimemazine Tartrate 30mg/5ml Syrup | | | ADVANZ Pharma | [5] |
| Alimemazine Tartrate 30mg/5ml Syrup | | | Thame Laboratories | [6] |
| Alimemazine Tartrate 30mg/5ml Syrup | | | Zentiva | [7] |
| Chlorphenamine maleate | Boots Allergy Relief 1 Year Plus Antihistamine 2mg/5ml Syrup | | | The Boots Company PLC | [8] |
| Piriton Syrup | | | GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare | [9] |
| Promethazine hydrochloride | Phenergan Elixir | | | SANOFI | [10] |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Antihistamine** | **Lactose-free formulation** | **Manufacturer** | **Ref** |
| **Non-sedating antihistamines** | | | |
| Bilastine | Ilaxten 20mg Tablets | A Menarini Farmaceutica Internazionale SRL | [11] |
| Cetirizine dihydrochloride | Benadryl Allergy Children’s 1mg/ml Oral Solution | McNeil Products Ltd | [12] |
| Benadryl Allergy Children’s 6+ 1mg/ml Oral Solution | McNeil Products Ltd | [13] |
| Benadryl Allergy Liquid Release 10mg Capsules | McNeil Products Ltd | [14] |
| Zirtek Allergy Solution 1mg/ml Oral Solution | UCB Pharma Ltd | [15] |
| Cetirizine hydrochloride | Boots Hayfever & Allergy Relief Syrup | The Boots Company PLC | [16] |
| Care Hayfever and Allergy 1mg/ml Solution | Thornton & Ross Ltd | [17] |
| Cetirizine Hydrochloride 5mg/5ml Oral Solution | Pinewood Healthcare | [18] |
| Cetirizine Hydrochloride 5mg/5ml Oral Solution | Cipla EU Ltd | [19] |
| Cetirizine Hydrochloride 5mg/5ml Solution | Fannin UK/Kent Pharma UK Ltd | [20] |
| Piriteze Allergy 1mg/ml Syrup | GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare | [21] |
| Ziralton Allergy Relief for Children 5mg/5ml Oral Solution | Pinewood Healthcare | [22] |
| Desloratadine | Desloratadine 0.5mg/ml Oral Solution | Accord-UK Ltd | [23] |
| Desloratadine Actavis 5mg  Film-Coated Tablets | Accord-UK Ltd | [24] |
| Desloratadine Mylan 5mg  Film-Coated Tablets | Mylan | [25] |
| NeoClarityn Oral Solution | Merck Sharp & Dohme Ltd | [26] |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Antihistamine** | **Lactose-free formulation** | **Manufacturer** | **Ref** |
| Fexofenadine hydrochloride | Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 120mg Film-Coated Tablets | Cipla EU Ltd | [27] |
| Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 120mg Film-Coated Tablets | Healthcare Pharma Ltd | [28] |
| Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 120mg Film-Coated Tablets | Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories (UK) Ltd | [29] |
| Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 180mg Film-Coated Tablets | Cipla EU Ltd | [30] |
| Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 180mg Film-Coated Tablets | Healthcare Pharma Ltd | [31] |
| Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 180mg Film-Coated Tablets | Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories (UK) Ltd | [32] |
| Telfast 30mg Film-coated Tablets | SANOFI | [33] |
| Telfast 120mg Film-Coated Tablets | SANOFI | [34] |
|  | Telfast 180mg Film-Coated Tablets | SANOFI | [35] |
| Levocetirizine dihydrochloride | Xyzal 0.5mg/ml Oral Solution | UCB Pharma Ltd | [36] |
|  | Lorapaed Allergy Relief 5mg/5ml Oral Solution | Pinewood Healthcare | [37] |
| Loratadine 5mg/5ml Syrup | Mylan | [38] |
| Loratadine 5mg/5ml Syrup | Pinewood Healthcare | [39] |
| Rupatadine fumarate | Rupatadine 1mg/ml Oral Solution | Aspire Pharma Ltd | [40] |

Limitations

* Information for this Q&A has been taken from the eMC. Generic products not listed in the eMC, ‘specials’ and lactose-free complementary medicines are not covered by this Q&A.
* The individual Summaries of Product Characteristics should be checked before prescribing as formulations may change.
* It has been assumed that all information concerning lactose in manufacturers’ Summaries of Product Characteristics is complete and correct.
* Although the ingredients of the products contain no obvious source of lactose, manufacturers often state that they cannot guarantee that the products have not been in contact with lactose during the manufacturing process.
* Antihistamines which are not licensed for the treatment of allergic conditions have been excluded from this Q&A.

### References

1. Watts N. Medicines Q&A – What factors need to be considered when prescribing for lactose intolerant adults? Southampton Medicines Advice Service. Date prepared: 16/08/2019. Accessed via <https://www.sps.nhs.uk/articles/what-factors-need-to-be-considered-when-prescribing-for-lactose-intolerant-adults-2/> on 14/09/2020.
2. ADVANZ Pharma. Summary of Product Characteristics for Alimemazine Tartrate 7.5mg/5ml Syrup. Date of revision of text: 28/03/2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
3. Thame Laboratories. Summary of Product Characteristics for Alimemazine Tartrate 7.5mg/5ml Syrup. Date of revision of text: 13/08/2018. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
4. Zentiva. Summary of Product Characteristics for Alimemazine Tartrate 7.5mg/5ml Syrup. Date of revision of text: 25/06/2020. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
5. ADVANZ Pharma. Summary of Product Characteristics for Alimemazine Tartrate 30mg/5ml Syrup. Date of revision of text: 28/03/2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
6. Thame Laboratories. Summary of Product Characteristics for Alimemazine Tartrate 30mg/5ml Syrup. Date of revision of text: 13/08/2018. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc)/ on 11/09/2020.
7. Zentiva. Summary of Product Characteristics for Alimemazine Tartrate 30mg/5ml Syrup. Date of revision of text: 25/06/2020. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
8. The Boots Company PLC. Summary of Product Characteristics for Boots Allergy Relief 1 Year Plus Antihistamine 2mg/5ml Syrup. Date of revision of text: 27/07/2018. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
9. GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare. Summary of Product Characteristics for Piriton Syrup. Date of revision of text: 17/07/2020. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
10. SANOFI. Summary of Product Characteristics for Phenergan Elixir. Date of revision of text: 27/01/2020. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
11. A. Menarini Farmaceutica Internazionale SRL. Summary of Product Characteristics for Ilaxten 20mg tablets. Date of revision of text: 09/08/2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
12. McNeil Products Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Benadryl Allergy Children’s 1mg/ml Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: 14/08/2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
13. McNeil Products Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Benadryl Allergy Children’s 6+ 1mg/ml Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: 14/08/2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
14. McNeil Products Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Benadryl Allergy Liquid Release 10mg Capsules. Date of revision of text: 12/11/2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
15. UCB Pharma Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Zirtek Allergy Solution 1mg/ml Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: May 2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
16. The Boots Company PLC. Summary of Product Characteristics for Boots Hayfever & Allergy Relief Syrup. Date of revision of text: 25/02/2011. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
17. Thornton & Ross Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Care Hayfever and Allergy 1mg/ml Solution. Date of revision of text: 05/03/2015. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
18. Pinewood Healthcare. Summary of Product Characteristics for Cetirizine Hydrochloride 5mg/5ml Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: 28/09/2018. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020
19. Cipla EU Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Cetirizine Hydrochloride 5mg/5ml Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: 23/12/2019. Accessed via: www.medicines.org.uk/emc/ on 11/09/2020.
20. Fannin UK /Kent Pharma UK Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Cetirizine Hydrochloride 5mg/5ml Solution. Date of revision of text: 19/08/2015. Accessed via [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
21. GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare. Summary of Product Characteristics for Piriteze Allergy 1mg/ml Syrup. Date of revision of text: 06/11/2018. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
22. Pinewood Healthcare. Summary of Product Characteristics for Ziralton Allergy Relief for Children 5mg/5ml Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: 21/07/2020. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
23. Accord-UK Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Desloratadine 0.5mg/ml Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: 04/06/2020. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
24. Accord-UK Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Desloratadine Actavis 5mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 06/05/2020. Accessed via [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
25. Mylan. Summary of Product Characteristics for Desloratadine Mylan 5mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 20/04/2020. Accessed via [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
26. Merck Sharp & Dohme Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for NeoClarityn Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: 16/01/2020. Accessed via: <http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/> on 11/09/2020.
27. Cipla EU Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 120mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 19/12/2018. Accessed via [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
28. Healthcare Pharma Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 120mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 05/04/2020. Accessed via [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
29. Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories (UK) Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Fexofenadine hydrochloride 120mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 13/09/2018. Accessed via [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
30. Cipla EU Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 180mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 19/12/2018. Accessed via [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
31. Healthcare Pharma Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 180mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 05/04/2020. Accessed via [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
32. Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories (UK) Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 180mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 13/09/2018. Accessed via [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
33. SANOFI. Summary of Product Characteristics for Telfast 30mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 18/10/2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
34. SANOFI. Summary of Product Characteristics for Telfast 120mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 18/10/2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
35. SANOFI. Summary of Product Characteristics for Telfast 180mg Film-Coated Tablets. Date of revision of text: 18/10/2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
36. UCB Pharma Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Xyzal 0.5mg/ml Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: 02/07/2019. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
37. Pinewood Healthcare. Summary of Product Characteristics for Lorapaed Allergy Relief 5mg/5ml Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: 16/05/2018. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
38. Mylan. Summary of Product Characteristics for Loratadine 5mg/5ml Syrup. Date of revision of text: December 2017. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
39. Pinewood Healthcare. Summary of Product Characteristics for Loratadine 5mg/5ml Syrup. Date of revision of text: 17/11/2016. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.
40. Aspire Pharma Ltd. Summary of Product Characteristics for Rupatadine 1mg/ml Oral Solution. Date of revision of text: 24/06/2018. Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) on 11/09/2020.

## Quality Assurance

### Prepared by

Gill Lewis, Specialist Pharmacy Technician – Medicines Information, South West Medicines Information, Bristol

### Date Prepared

28/09/2020

Checked byMichèle Skipp, Senior Medicines Information Pharmacist, South West Medicines Information, Bristol

### Date of check

16/10/2020

### Search strategy

* In-house database/resources: British National Formulary. Accessed via [www.medicinescomplete.com](http://www.medicinescomplete.com/) [Online] Antihistamines. Accessed 11/09/2020.
* SPS Website [www.sps.nhs.uk](http://www.sps.nhs.uk/). Lactose. Accessed 11/09/2020.
* Electronic Medicines Compendium Accessed via: [www.medicines.org.uk/emc/](http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/) : search terms used = acrivastine, alimemazine, bilastine, cetirizine, chlorphenamine, desloratadine, fexofenadine, levocetirizine, loratadine, mizolastine, promethazine, rupatadine. Accessed 11/09/2020.