

QIPP Detail Aid

Providing support for quality in prescribing

PREDNISOLONE - USE PLAIN, NOT EC TABLETS

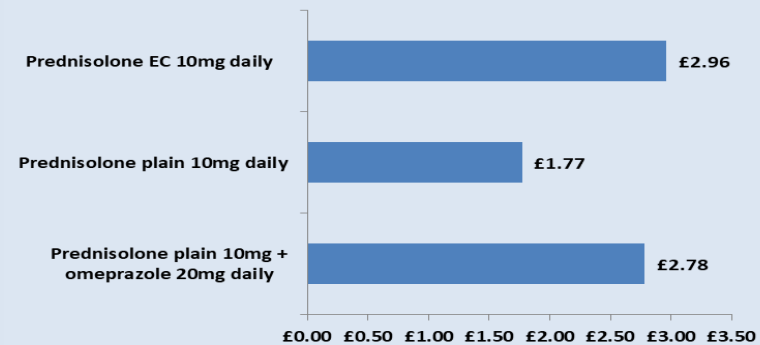
WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

- There is no good evidence that using enteric coated (EC) prednisolone reduces the risk of causing peptic ulcers (PU) compared with plain prednisolone.
- According to the BNF, the potential advantage of EC preparations is speculative only.
- In Aug 18-Jul 19 NHS Barnsley CCG spent nearly £6,000 on enteric coated prednisolone.

WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE?

- Limited data suggests that corticosteroids appear to be weakly linked with PU; most relevant in patients with a history of, or diseases linked to PU. Any effect appears dependent on dose and duration.
- In 1987 the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin concluded that uncertainty remains as to whether enteric coating decreases the tendency of steroids to cause ulcers.
- Its overall conclusion was that the use of EC prednisolone to decrease risk remains speculative and probably leads to a false sense of security.
- Since that date, small pharmacokinetics studies have noted lower and slower time-to-peak plasma concentration with EC compared with uncoated prednisolone tablets, though bioavailability was generally similar. A small number of case reports have indicated problems with disease control with use of EC or with switch to EC formulation.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS



KEY MESSAGES

- **Prescribe plain prednisolone.**
- **Using EC prednisolone probably leads to a false sense of security.**
- **EC tablets may have less predictable absorption. When switching from EC to plain prednisolone, monitor disease control.**

References:

1. UKMi Medicines Q&A Is there any evidence to support the use of enteric coated (EC) over uncoated prednisolone tablets? January 2013. Available online at: https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sps.nhs.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2013%2F06%2FQA310_3_ec_Pred_June2013.doc
2. Drug Tariff October 2019. Available online at <http://www.drugtariff.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/#/00738682-DD/DD00738671/Home> <Accessed November 2019>

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