Department of Health & Social Care

NHS England

Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2025/062

Rivastigmine 4.6mg/24hours and 9.5mg/24hours transdermal patches

Tier 3 – high impact*
Date of issue: 03/12/2025
Link: Medicines Supply Tool

Summary

- Rivastigmine **4.6mg/24hours** and **9.5mg/24hours** transdermal patches are in limited supply until w/c 15 December 2025 (see Supporting Information).
- Rivastigmine **13.3mg/24hours** transdermal patches remain available but cannot support an uplift in demand.
- Rivastigmine (Zeyzelf) **twice weekly** 4.6 mg/24hours transdermal patch is out of stock until w/c 15/12/25.
- Rivastigmine (Zeyzelf) **twice weekly** 9.5 mg/24hours transdermal patch remains available but cannot support uplift in demand.
- Alternative formulations of acetylcholinesterase (AChE) inhibitors remain available, except for galantamine modified release capsules, which are in limited supply (see Supporting Information).
- Unlicensed supplies of rivastigmine 4.6mg/24hours and 9.5mg/24hours transdermal patches may be sourced, lead times vary.

Actions Required

Clinicians should not initiate new patients on rivastigmine transdermal patches until the supply issue has resolved and should:

- review patients to establish if they have insufficient supply to last until the resupply date, to avoid abrupt cessation of treatment and risk of worsening cognitive or behavioural symptoms;
- prioritise remaining stock for patients unable to swallow oral formulations or who could not tolerate their gastrointestinal side effects;
- for patients able to swallow solid dosage forms, consider prescribing an oral rivastigmine formulation (see Supporting Information), taking into account treatment history; and
- where these options are not suitable, consider prescribing unlicensed supplies of rivastigmine patches (see Supporting Information).

Advice should be sought from specialists if the above options are not considered suitable and for further advice on treatment options, including consideration of once daily donepezil, if the twice daily dosing regimen of oral rivastigmine is inconvenient for patients/carers.

Supporting information

Supply overview of rivastigmine patches (**once daily**)

Brand	4.6mg/24hours	9.5mg/24hours	13mg/24hours
Almuriva®	Out of stock until w/c 8/12/25	Out of stock until w/c 15/12/25	Out of stock, resupply TBC
Alzest®	Discontinued	Discontinued	Discontinued
Erastig®	N/A	N/A	Out of stock until w/c 22/12/25
Exelon®	Limited supply		

*Classification of Tiers can be found at the following link:
https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/a-guide-to-managing-medicines-supply-and-shortages/

Generic (Luye)	Out of stock until w/c 15/12/25	Limited supply

For Zeyself®, a **twice weekly** rivastigmine transdermal patch, the 9.5mg/24 hours strength is in stock, but the 4.6mg/24 hours strength is out of stock until w/c 15/12/25.

Note: Care is needed if switching between daily and twice weekly rivastigmine patches to avoid risk of dosing error.

Clinical information

Of the AChE inhibitors, only rivastigmine is available as a transdermal formulation.

Rivastigmine patches are licensed for the symptomatic treatment of mild to moderately severe Alzheimer's dementia. Abrupt cessation of treatment should be avoided as it can be associated with a sudden decline in cognition and function. If treatment has not been interrupted for more than three days, the patch can be resumed at the same dose, otherwise, treatment should be re-initiated with 4.6 mg/24 hours.

Dose conversion between available acetylcholinesterase inhibitors

The dose of rivastigmine released from the transdermal patch over 24 hours cannot be directly equated to the amount of rivastigmine contained in a capsule with respect to plasma concentration produced over 24 hours. Data are lacking on dose conversion from transdermal to oral rivastigmine. Pharmacokinetic models suggest drug exposure was not significantly different between the 4.6 mg/24hour patch and 3 mg twice daily (6 mg/day) capsule doses, or between the 9.5 mg/24-hour patch and 6 mg BD (12 mg/day) capsule doses.

Table 1: Dose conversion based on pharmacokinetic data*

Rivastigmine patch strength	Rivastigmine capsules or 2mg/ml oral solution sugar free
4.6mg/24hours	3mg twice daily
9.5mg/24hours	6mg twice daily

**If the equivalent oral dose causes GI side effects after switching, the dose should be lowered as needed and patients switched back to patches when the supply issue has resolved.*

Links to further information
SmPC – Rivastigmine
SmPC – Donepezil
SmPC – Galantamine
BNF: Dementia
NICE guidance (TA217)

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports
The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed rivastigmine 4.6mg/24hours and 9.5mg/24hours transdermal patches (please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):

- Chemys
- Target Healthcare

Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine must consider the relevant guidance and NHS Trust or local governance procedures. Unlicensed imports do not undergo any central quality assessment or suitability evaluation. Therefore, any import must be locally assessed in line with local unlicensed medicines processes.

Please see the links below for further information:

- The supply of unlicensed medicinal products, Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
- Professional Guidance for the Procurement and Supply of Specials, Royal Pharmaceutical Society
- Prescribing unlicensed medicines, General Medical Council (GMC)

When prescribing a product that is not licensed in the UK due to a supply issue with the licensed alternative prescribers must indicate on the FP10 prescription that an unlicensed product is required. This can be done in one of the following two ways:

Electronic prescriptions – if the required unlicensed product is shown on electronic prescribing systems, GPs should select:

- Rivastigmine 4.6mg/24hours transdermal patches (imported)
- Rivastigmine 9.5mg/24hours transdermal patches (imported)

Paper prescriptions – where the unlicensed product is not shown on electronic prescribing systems, GPs should use a paper prescription and annotate with the following wording: "**special order**".

Enquiries

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