

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Recall of 3 brands of Losartan Products

#### 1. Which are the high blood pressure medicines recalled by the Health Sciences Authority?

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) has recalled three brands of high blood pressure medicine which contain losartan – *Losartas*, *Losagen* and *Hyperten* – on 28 March 2019.

Seven other brands of losartan medicine approved in Singapore are not affected by the recall.

#### 2. Why are three brands of high blood pressure medicines being recalled?

These products were found to contain trace amounts of a nitrosamine impurity, N-nitroso-N-methyl-4-aminobutyric acid (NMBA), which are above internationally acceptable levels.

Nitrosamines, such as NMBA, are environmental contaminants and they are also found in food or the environment in very minute amounts.

#### 3. Will there be any health risk to continue consuming the recalled medicine?

There is no immediate health risk to patients taking the affected products. Sudden stopping of the medicines can lead to heart attacks and stroke. Patients should not stop taking the medicines on their own until they have been provided with a replacement brand of losartan or a different medicine by their healthcare provider.

#### 4. I am not sure if my medicine is affected. What should I do?

Patients who are concerned about their medicine or are not sure if they are affected, are advised to consult their healthcare providers or doctors.

#### 5. I am currently taking the recalled medicine. What should I do?

Patients are strongly advised to continue taking their medicine until their healthcare providers arrange for them to stop or switch to suitable alternatives.

Public healthcare institutions will be reaching out to their patients.

- a. Patients whose medical appointments are scheduled before 1 July 2019 should proceed with their appointments as scheduled and their doctor will advise them on suitable alternative medicines.
- b. Patients whose medical appointments are scheduled on/after 1 July 2019 will be contacted for an earlier consultation and medication review.

#### 6. Will I be able to get a replacement for the recalled medicines that I have been given?

Patients at their next medical appointment will be advised by their doctor on suitable alternative medicines.

To ensure continued availability of high blood pressure medication for all patients who need them, patients may receive their medication on a one-month basis. This ensures that patients in all settings are able to promptly receive the medication they need. This may be the practice for the next six months.

## **7. What are the alternative medicines patients can take?**

There are alternative high blood pressure medicines besides losartan. These include other angiotensin receptor blocker (ARB) class of medicines, such as Telmisartan and Valsartan, as well as Angiotensin Converting Enzyme Inhibitor (ACEIs) class of medicines such as Enalapril and Lisinopril.

Please consult your healthcare professionals who will advise suitable patients to switch to appropriate alternatives.

## **8. Do I have to pay more for the replacement medicines?**

At public healthcare institutions, patients currently on losartan will not have to pay more during the interim period should they switch to replacement medications, which will be priced the same or lower. Refunds will be provided to patients returning the affected losartan medication at their public healthcare institutions.

## **9. Do I have to pay for any extra consultations, test or deliveries for the replacement medicines?**

Charges incurred for services such as additional consultations or tests to assess suitability for a switch in medicine will also be waived.