



Important news and alerts about pharmacy products

Shortage: Sterile Water for Injection and Sodium Chloride Injection 0.9% (vials)

The Issue:

There is a current acute shortage of sterile water for injection and sodium chloride injection 0.9% vials. Supply is unpredictable and while alternative manufacturers are being explored, demand is expected to exceed supply. The duration of the shortage is not known. Sterile water for injection and sodium chloride injection vials are primarily used to reconstitute medications available as lyophilized powders.

The consequences of reconstituting with alternative sterile liquids not listed in product labeling may include poor dissolution of the powder, precipitation, deactivation of the active pharmaceutical ingredient, or changes in solution osmolality.

Action:

Local conservation strategies must be implemented by nursing and pharmacy staff, in collaboration with prescribers, as appropriate for your practice setting.

- **Reserve sterile water for injection vials for those medications that can only be reconstituted with sterile water.**
 - Refer to the AHS Provincial Parenteral Monographs for information on alternative sterile liquids for reconstitution.
- When clinically appropriate, collaborate with prescribers to switch IV medications to oral formulations (e.g. antimicrobials such as sulfamethoxazole-trimethoprim). Consult Pharmacy as needed.
- As the stock of minibags has now stabilized, the **temporary** use of minibags is approved for reconstituting medications for the duration of this shortage.
 - When appropriate, use a reconstitution device OR
 - When preparing IV direct medications, withdraw desired reconstitution volume from minibag using aseptic technique.
 - Use one bag for one patient only. Label the minibag and discard used minibag after 1 hour. Multiple accesses to a single use minibag increases the risk of contamination. Remember **new needle, new syringe** every time.
- Sodium chloride 0.9% flush syringes **should not** be used for reconstituting medications.
http://www.ismp.org/newsletters/acutecare/articles/20061116_2.asp
- **Do not** use sterile water for irrigation, sodium chloride 0.9% for irrigation, or bacteriostatic water for injection as substitutes for medication reconstitution.

Contact Information:

For further information, contact your site Pharmacy Department.

March 12, 2018

Best Practice

Drug Discontinuation

Label Change

Medication Change

Medication Safety ✓

Recall

Vendor Change

Drug Shortage ✓

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Pharmacy Team Leads

For the information of:

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All Nursing Staff
All Clinical Nurse
Educators
All Patient Care Managers

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