NHS
Suffolk and
North East Essex

Position Statement for Medicines of Low Value

OMEGA-3 FATTY ACID COMPOUNDS

Summary

The Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board (SNEE ICB) does not support the prescribing of omega-3 fatty acid compounds, in line with NHS England's national guidance on medicines which should no longer be prescribed due to a lack of robust evidence of clinical effectiveness or there are significant safety concerns.[1]

All omega 3 compounds are classed as "Double Red" i.e., no prescribing in primary or secondary care

There are no patient exceptionalities identified

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance recommends against prescribing omega-3 fatty acids for the primary or secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease, alone or in combination with a statin, including in people with chronic kidney disease (CKD) or type 1 or type 2 diabetes.[1]

NICE has also issued 'do not do' recommendations for omega-3 for NICE CG172, NICE CG170, NICE CG107, NICE CG71 and NICE CG186 states "Do not offer omega-3 or omega-6 fatty acid compounds to treat multiple sclerosis (MS)" and NICE CG155.

Advice is available from the British Dietetic Association on Omega-3 rich foods (click here).[2]

DEPRESCRIBING ADVICE

- **Deprescribe Omega-3 fatty acid compounds for all patients who have these products on repeat or acute**
- Patients should be advised of the lack of robust evidence to support its ongoing use
- Patients wishing to continue using these products should be directed to pharmacies or supermarkets for purchasing over the counter (OTC)
- Patients should be made aware that these cannot be prescribed by the GP under any circumstances
- Where the products have been started by cardiologists, patients should be advised that cardiologists are in support of the guidance and are no longer recommending the use of omega-3 fatty acid compounds for new and existing patients

Produced by the SNEE ICB Medicines Optimisation Teams (MOT) in collaboration with East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT) and West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (WSFT) version 1.0

Approved by the SNEE Integrated Medicines Optimisation Sub-Committee (IMOC) November 2022 for review November 2024

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NEW PATIENTS

- **Do not prescribe Omega-3 fatty acid compounds under any circumstances**
- Patients should be advised of the lack of robust evidence to support its ongoing use
- Patients should be made aware that these cannot be prescribed by the GP under any circumstances
- Requests from secondary care must not be fulfilled and advice sought for alternative products where required

FURTHER SUPPORT

- National Patient Information Leaflets have been developed and can be supplied to patients to help support the deprescribing of these products (click here)
- Patients who wish to seek further clarification can be directed to Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) via:
    - E-mail: sneeicb.pals@nhs.net
    - Telephone: 0800 389 6819

Reference

1. PrescQIPP. Bulletin 210: Omega-3 fatty acid compounds and other fish oils. PrescQIPP. [Online] 10 2018. https://www.prescqipp.info/media/3758/210-omega-3-fatty-acid-compounds-and-other-fish-oils-20.pdf.
2. The British Dietetic Association (BDA): The Association of UK Dietitians . Food Fact Sheet: Omega 3. [Online] September 2017. [Cited: 07 05, 2019.] https://www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts/omega3.pdf.
3. NHS England and NHS Clinical Commissioners. Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs. s.l. : NHS England, June 2019.

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