

Medicines Management Team Advisory Summary

The product licences for both Gamolenic acid preparations (Epogam® and Efamast®) were withdrawn in October 2002 due to lack of efficacy

Prescribers should review those patients currently prescribed gamolenic acid and advise to buy “Evening primrose oil” OTC if required

Introduction

- Gamolenic acid is found in evening primrose oil
- Evening primrose oil was previously available as licensed medicine for the treatment of atopic eczema and mastalgia
- Product licences were withdrawn in 2002 because efficacy data no longer met the standards required for marketing authorisation
- There is no safety issue related to the licences withdrawal

Formulary Status

- It is **not recommended** to prescribe Gamolenic acid under the NHS as there is not enough evidence to support its use
- **Gamolenic acid does not appear on BNF as a medicine**

Recommended Actions

- Review patients who are taking gamolenic acid on prescription (both 40mg and 80mg)
- Discontinue prescribing and advice to buy Evening primrose oil if patient wishes to continue to take it after discussion of the available evidence
- There is no generally agreed recommended daily amount
- No further evidence has been found to support its use in PMS, rheumatoid arthritis or multiple sclerosis

Wiltshire CCG Cost Impact

Although it is not recommended on prescriptions, an estimate of **40 patients** had Gamolenic acid on their repeat prescription in Wiltshire in 2014/2015 with an estimated total cost of **£14,000**

References

1. Chenoy et al. Effect of oral gamolenic acid from evening primrose oil on menopausal flushing. BMJ 1994