

Prescribing supplements such as glucosamine and chondroitin on the NHS is not recommended.

STOP prescriptions in existing patients and DO NOT start in new patients.

Evidence

NHS England has recently advised that there should be no routine prescribing of glucosamine and chondroitin products on the NHS, as these products have been identified to be 'blacklisted'.

More information available from WCCG [Low Value Medicines \(LVM\) Part 1 Blacklist](#)

Glucosamine was not found to be more effective than placebo with respect to pain and function by a Cochrane systematic review on a meta-analysis of data from 20 RCTs.

The British Medical Journal published the results of a meta-analysis: The authors conclude that active treatment does **"not reduce joint pain or have an impact on narrowing of joint space"**. They further advise that the cost of these treatments should not be covered by health organisations and that new treatment initiations should be avoided.

NICE CG177 guideline on osteoarthritis advises against prescribing glucosamine or chondroitin.

Recommended Actions

- Identify patients currently receiving treatment with glucosamine and/or chondroitin.
- STOP prescribing in existing patients and inform of future unavailability on the NHS.
- No new patients should be initiated.
- Advise patients to purchase over the counter (OTC) if they feel they obtain benefit from these supplements.
- Use **PrescQIPP PIL**: [Changes to glucosamine prescribing](#) to support patients in this change.
- AVOID in patients who are on WARFARIN or are allergic to shellfish.

Wiltshire CCG Cost Impact

Wiltshire CCG and practices have already acted to significantly reduce spend in these areas to low levels, but here are still a few patients in Wiltshire receiving prescriptions for these non-recommended items. Spend has considerably reduced from £4000 per year to under £500 for 2017/18.

References

1. Glucosamine therapy for treating Osteoarthritis: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD002946.pub2/full>
2. Wandel S et al (2010). Effects of glucosamine, chondroitin, or placebo in patients with osteoarthritis of hip or knee: network meta-analysis. BMJ Available from <http://www.bmj.com/content/341/bmj.c4675.abstract>
3. NICE CG177 (2014) Osteoarthritis: care and management. Available from <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG177>
4. PrescQIPP Low Value Medicines support pack, background info and PILs available from <https://www.prescqipp.info/droplist/projectsection/default1/the-prescqipp-drop-list#low-value-medicines-lvm>
5. NHS England Consultation Report on Findings 30 November 2017 available from <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/items-which-should-not-be-routinely-prescribed-in-primary-care-consultation-report-of-findings/>