NHS
Frimley

Hypertonic saline nebules in Cystic Fibrosis
(sodium chloride 3% / 7% solution for nebulisation)

During a recent formulary review it was noticed that hypertonic saline nebules were assigned "red" traffic light on the formulary. This has now been changed to amber no shared care. Many patients already obtain this through primary care, so it is not anticipated to cause an additional workload. The formulary has been updated to match with what is practice already.

Dosing

Hypertonic saline nebulises are indicated as a mucolytic in people with Cystic Fibrosis (CF). The usual dose is 1 nebule (4mLs) twice a day continuously and it can be administered through any nebuliser. Most patients will be prescribed 7% however, if a patient cannot tolerate this, they may be prescribed 3%.

Some patients will administer this through an airway clearance device (e.g., Aerobika).

On initiation patients will have a test dose with a CF specialist physiotherapist. To alleviate bronchospasm, they may be advised to pre-treat with a bronchodilator, this is commonly salbutamol, via inhaler or nebuliser.

There is no need to dilute or mix the medication.

Monitoring

The CF unit remain responsible for the initiation, monitoring and review of the medicine. The CF team also remain responsible for the supply, maintenance, servicing and repair of the nebuliser device and any additional equipment needed to administer this treatment.

Supply

Hypertonic saline nebules are available on FP10 prescription from major wholesalers as a variety of brands.

There is a potential cost saving from prescribing a particular brand of hypertonic saline nebules; your local medicines optimisation team will be able to advise further. The CF team agree that all brands of sodium chloride 7% for nebulisation are interchangeable and therefore switches to more cost-effective products is acceptable.

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