

Position Statement: Pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy (PERT) shortage – advice for the management of adults with pancreatic exocrine insufficiency. Phillips M.E et al

The ongoing intermittent supply issues surrounding pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy (PERT – under the product brands: Creon®, Nutrizym® and Pancrex®) mean some people are running out of PERT or experiencing difficulties or delays in accessing PERT. This position paper, updated 24th June 2024 (**Version 3**), provides advice to clinicians' managing adult patients with pancreatic exocrine insufficiency (PEI), with specific sections addressing the needs of prescribers and dietitians. Specialist advice should be sought for children with PEI or those patients with cystic fibrosis. Please ensure that you refer to the most up to date, Version 3: 24/6/2024: <https://www.psgbi.org/position-statement-pert-shortage/>

Advice for Prescribers includes a conversion chart to support alternative PERT prescriptions; clinical management suggestions for prescribing PPI or H2 receptor antagonist to reduce acid degradation of the PERT and optimise efficacy; prescribing doses of loperamide for patients experiencing loose bowel motions or faecal urgency due to lack of PERT; to be aware that patients on insulin or oral hypoglycaemic agents that can cause hypoglycaemia may experience worsening control and be more susceptible to hypoglycaemia; and information about the impact of malabsorptive diarrhoea on both nutritional status and the absorption of medications.

Please refer to the latest Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) medicines supply notification regarding supply available within the UK. These are updated regularly.

- Creon 10,000 should be prioritised for children and those unable to swallow larger capsules
- Nutrizym 22 should be prioritised for those unable to tolerate Creon preparations

Updated information: *It is likely that imported medications may be needed and details on these are provided within the appendices. Please liaise with your local pharmacy teams regarding access to imported medication.*

Only dose escalate PERT in nutritionally compromised patients – liaise with medical teams to access loperamide for those who are weight stable to minimise any diarrhoea (Not appropriate for patients with CF or some patients with NETs.)

Advice for Dietitians includes reminding patients to store PERT correctly; to optimise absorption of nutrients by spreading the dose of PERT throughout the meal and to only dose escalate PERT in nutritionally compromised patients, referring onto medical teams as appropriate. Specialist peptide based oral nutritional supplements (ONS) that reduce the need for PERT are listed and guidance provided on how to use them.

In summary, whilst the supply issues are ongoing, the Position Statement recommends:

- Please do NOT encourage patients to stockpile PERT medicines.
- *We suggest patients place their prescription requests as soon as their previous prescription has been dispensed to give the community pharmacist time to source the medication if available. Please ensure that automated prescription systems do not reject these prescription requests.*
- Advise patients to try to use one pharmacy if leaving prescriptions on a “back order”.
- In line with the Medicines Supply Notification from the Department of Health and Social Care (issued 16/2/24 MSN/2024/022). Please ensure that only one-month supply is issued at a time.
- An EMIS search is available in EMIS Enterprise to find people prescribed PERT.

Sources of further advice:

- For patients with Cystic Fibrosis please contact the patients' CF Specialist team.
- For all other patients, contact your local tertiary hepato-pancreatico-biliary (HPB)/ pancreatic unit.

Advice for Patients is also now in the format of a position statement and includes reassurance and practical medical and nutritional ideas, based on the phase of PERT supply.

[Position Statement Shortage of PERT Patient Advice Version 3 24th June 2024 1.pdf \(psgbi.org\)](#)

Summary produced 1/7/2024 by Prescribing Support dietitian NHS Frimley, from original document by Phillips M.E. et al (24th June 2024, Version 3).