

Health Advisory: Shortage of Penicillin to Treat Syphilis

Minnesota Department of Health Thu May 18 14:00 CDT 2017

Action Steps:

Local and tribal health departments: Please forward to hospitals and clinics in your jurisdiction.

Hospital and clinics: Please distribute to primary care providers, emergency/urgent care, OB/GYN, nurse- midwives, and dermatologists.

Health care providers:

- Stop using penicillin G benzathine (Bicillin L-A®) for treatment of infectious diseases other than early syphilis (e.g., streptococcal pharyngitis) where other effective antibiotics are available.
- Follow the recommended dosing regimen of 2.4 million units of penicillin G benzathine IM for the treatment of primary, secondary and early latent syphilis (i.e., early syphilis). Additional doses to treat early syphilis do not enhance efficacy, including in patients living with HIV infection.
- Contact your pharmacists/distributors to obtain penicillin G benzathine (Bicillin L-A®), if you do not have product readily available. If product reaches a critical supply level of three weeks or less, contact Pfizer at 800-533-4535 for assistance.
- Use aqueous crystalline penicillin G to treat neurosyphilis, ocular syphilis, and congenital syphilis while penicillin G procaine is currently not available.
- Contact MDH (651-201-5414), a local ID specialist, or the on-line National Network of STD Clinical Prevention Training Centers (NNPTC) STD Clinical Consultation Network (<https://www.stdccn.org>) with questions about syphilis management.

Background

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, (CDC), notified the Minnesota Department of Health, (MDH), about a shortage of benzathine penicillin G (Bicillin-LA) and penicillin G procaine due to manufacturing delays. CDC is working with the FDA and Pfizer to address this situation. This shortage remains ongoing and a resolution is not expected until the end of 2017. This health advisory contains additional information and guidance for health care providers.

Obtain additional doses of penicillin G benzathine (Bicillin L-A®)

Hospitals and clinics can:

- Contact distributor.
- When supply nears critical level, contact Pfizer Injectables at 844-646-4398, press 3 for Supply Continuity Team.
- Notify MDH if you anticipate your facility's inventory falls below a 2 month supply or if it is unable to procure medication: 651-201-5414. MDH may be able to facilitate an emergency supply.

For more information

Visit the MDH web page for more detailed treatment guidelines, to learn more about syphilis and the Partner Services Program <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/syphilis/index.html> . For specific information on the Bicillin shortage please refer to the MDH web page <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/syphilis/hcp/penicillin.html>. For questions please call 651-201-5414.

A copy of this HAN is available in PDF and Word format at www.health.state.mn.us/han. The content of this message is intended for public health and health care personnel and response partners who have a need to know the information to perform their duties.