

Position statement on the prescribing of products for infant colic drops on prescription

These preparations include Colief[®], Infacol[®] and Dentinox Colic Drops[®]

In line with NHS England's guidance on conditions for which over the counter items should not be routinely prescribed, SW London CCGs* do not recommend the routine prescribing of infant colic drops containing simeticone (Infacol[®] and Dentinox Colic Drops[®]) or lactase (Colief[®]) for patients who do not meet the Advisory Committee on Borderline Substances (ACBS) criteria* for lactose intolerance.

*ACBS criteria states that Colief[®] should only be prescribed:

For the relief of symptoms associated with lactose intolerance in infants, provided that lactose intolerance is confirmed by the presence of reducing substances and/or excessive acid in stools, a low concentration of the corresponding disaccharide enzyme on intestinal biopsy or by breath hydrogen test or lactose intolerance test.¹

Rationale

- Evidence supporting prescribing of Colief[®], which contains lactase, is limited.²
- Currently there is no convincing evidence that simeticone treatment (Infacol[®] or Dentinox Colic Drops[®]) reduces the symptoms of infant colic.²
- Gripe water should not be prescribed for infant colic as it is not licensed for this condition and there is no clinical data to support using it. It is licensed for the symptomatic relief of distress associated with wind in infants up to one year old.²
- As colic eventually improves on its own, medical treatment is not usually recommended.³

References

1. NHSBSA Drug Tariff (November 2016). Accessed 16/11/2016. Available at: http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/PrescriptionServices/Documents/PPD%20Drug%20Tariff/November_2016.pdf
2. PrescQIPP (2015) Lactase (Colief[®]), simeticone (Dentinox Colic Drops[®] and Infacol[®]) and gripe water in the management of infantile colic. Accessed 08/11/16. Available at: <https://www.prescqipp.info/infantile-colic-drop-list/send/167-infantile-colic-drop-list/2011-bulletin-99-infantile-colic>
3. NHS England. Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/conditions-for-which-over-the-counter-items-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-guidance-for-ccgs/> Updated 29th March 2018.

*SWL CCGs (NHS Croydon CCG, NHS Kingston CCG, NHS Merton CCG, NHS Richmond CCG, NHS Sutton CCG and NHS Wandsworth CCG) position statement on prescribing of products for infant colic

Guidance for clinicians on the prescribing of products for infant colic

Recommendations:

- Advise that there is a lack of evidence around the use of these preparations, and that if the parent or carer wishes to try this despite the lack of evidence that Colief[®], Infacol[®] and Dentinox Colic Drops[®] can be purchased from pharmacies and retail outlets.²
- Colief[®] is not a licensed medicinal product. It should be purchased unless prescribed as a borderline substance according to ACBS criteria. Prescriptions should be endorsed 'ACBS'.²

ACBS criteria:¹

For the relief of symptoms associated with lactose intolerance in infants, provided that lactose intolerance is confirmed by the presence of reducing substances and/or excessive acid in stools, a low concentration of the corresponding disaccharide enzyme on intestinal biopsy or by breath hydrogen test or lactose intolerance test.

- Review existing patients prescribed Colief[®] to ensure they meet ACBS criteria (see above). Patients who do not meet ACBS criteria should not be prescribed Colief[®] on the NHS.²
- New patients should meet the ACBS indication before being prescribed Colief[®] on the NHS.²
- The most useful intervention for infant colic is support for parents and reassurance that colic will resolve.²
- Treatment should be stopped if there is no response after one week.²

Guidance for patients, carers and guardians on obtaining medicines for infant colic

- Colief[®], Infacol[®] and Dentinox Colic Drops[®] can be purchased from pharmacies and retail outlets.
- Treatment should be stopped if there is no response after one week.

The NHS belongs to YOU, use it responsibly