



Management – Conserving Antibiotic Suspensions

Dec. 9, 2022

Dear Health Care Practitioner,

Health Canada has declared a [Tier 3](#) shortage for several antibiotic suspensions. Tier 3 is the most critical level and is expected to have a significant impact on the health care system. Many antibiotic suspensions are not available or are sporadically available in extremely limited supply.

There may be current supply of certain antibiotic suspensions, but we should expect these to also become depleted as prescribing shifts to them. **Tablets and capsules are currently available.** This message will address:

- Strategies for conserving antibiotic suspensions
- Resources for managing this shortage
- Resources to help your patients understand the shortage

Management – Conserving Antibiotic Suspensions

1. Only prescribe antibiotics when necessary: Stewardship Resources

- [CPS Managing critical drug shortages in clinical practice](#): includes information about prescribing according to best evidence
- [RxFiles Prescription for a Viral Infection – Pediatric](#)
- [RxFiles Antibiotic Harms chart](#)
- [CFPC/CWC Are you using antibiotics wisely?](#): infographic
- [U of Waterloo How to Rethink Antibiotics](#): infographic

2. When considering prescribing antibiotics:

- **Use non-suspension alternatives like capsules or tablets:**
 - Can be opened and sprinkled, or crushed if child cannot swallow whole
 - [medSask Medication Administration Tips \(including resources for helping children learn to swallow pills\)](#)
- **Provide a diagnosis (and child's weight) on the prescription:** this enables pharmacists to provide alternative antibiotic recommendations
 - [CPhA/medSask Therapeutic Alternatives for Pediatric Conditions](#)
- **Delay prescribing:** [Choosing Wisely Delayed Prescription](#)
- **Use shortest effective course of therapy:** [CPhA Optimizing Duration of Therapy](#)

3. Information to share with patients

- [RxFiles Antibiotic Awareness](#): posters
- [RxFiles Antibiotic Harms](#): infographic