

Monthly Prescribing Recommendation May 2016

Rizatriptan and Zolmitriptan

During May, we ask that practices review their branded and generic prescribing of Rizatriptan and Zolmitriptan, plain and orodispersible tablets due to considerable differences in price. Patients should be prescribed the product that is clinically appropriate with the lowest NHS acquisition cost.

Background

Generic prescribing is recognised as a sign of good practice as well as generally being more cost effective. Generic versions of rizatriptan and zolmitriptan are more cost effective than the branded equivalent. In addition, if a dispersible preparation is required, the generic orodispersible tablets are considerably cheaper than the generic (and branded) oral lyophilisate dispersible formulation. NICE guidance recommends when prescribing a triptan, start with the one that has the lowest acquisition cost; if this is consistently ineffective, try one or more alternative triptans. (CG 150, Sept 2012). The table below shows the difference in cost for rizatriptan and zolmitriptan preparations, with sumatriptan included for comparison. Practice data is shown overleaf.

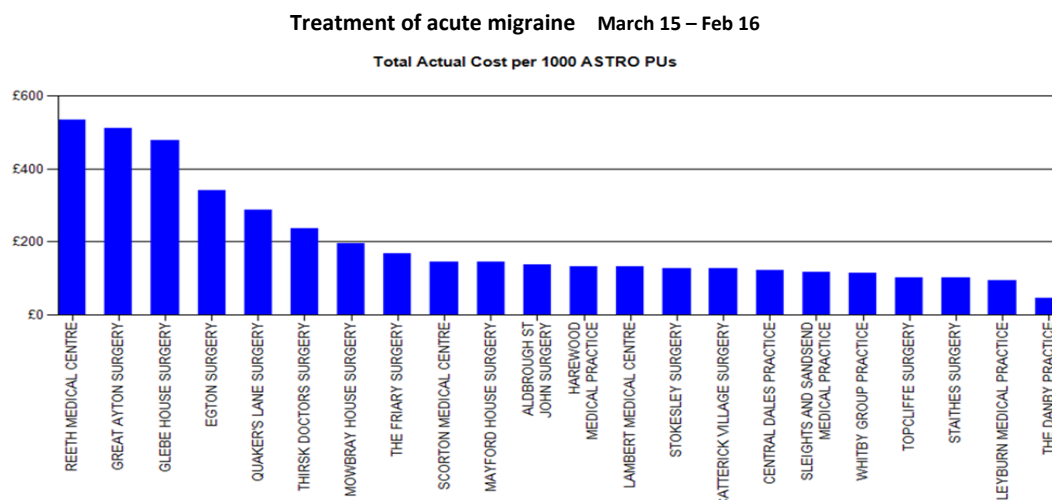
Drug	Price for 6 tablets
Rizatriptan tablets 10mg	£3.42
Maxalt tablets 10mg	£26.74
Rizatriptan orodispersible tablets 10mg	£4.52
Rizatriptan oral lyophilisates 10mg	£26.74
Maxalt oral lyophilisates 10mg	£26.74
Maxalt Melt Wafers 10mg	£26.74
Zolmitriptan tablets 2.5mg	£1.71
Zomig tablets 2.5 mg	£23.94
Zolmitriptan orodispersible tablets 2.5mg	£1.58
Zolmitriptan orodispersible tablets 5mg	£11.11
Zomig orodispersible tablets 2.5mg	£23.99
Zomig orodispersible tablets 5mg	£23.94
Zomig Rapimelt	£23.94
For comparison: Sumatriptan tablets 50mg	£1.32
Sumatriptan tablets 100mg	£1.62

In the 12 months to January 2016 the total spend in HRWCCG for Rizatriptan and Zolmitriptan (branded and generic, all formulations) was over £43,000. The potential annual savings in HRW CCG for an 85% switch from rizatriptan lyophilisates to orodispersible alone is over £14,000.

Recommendations

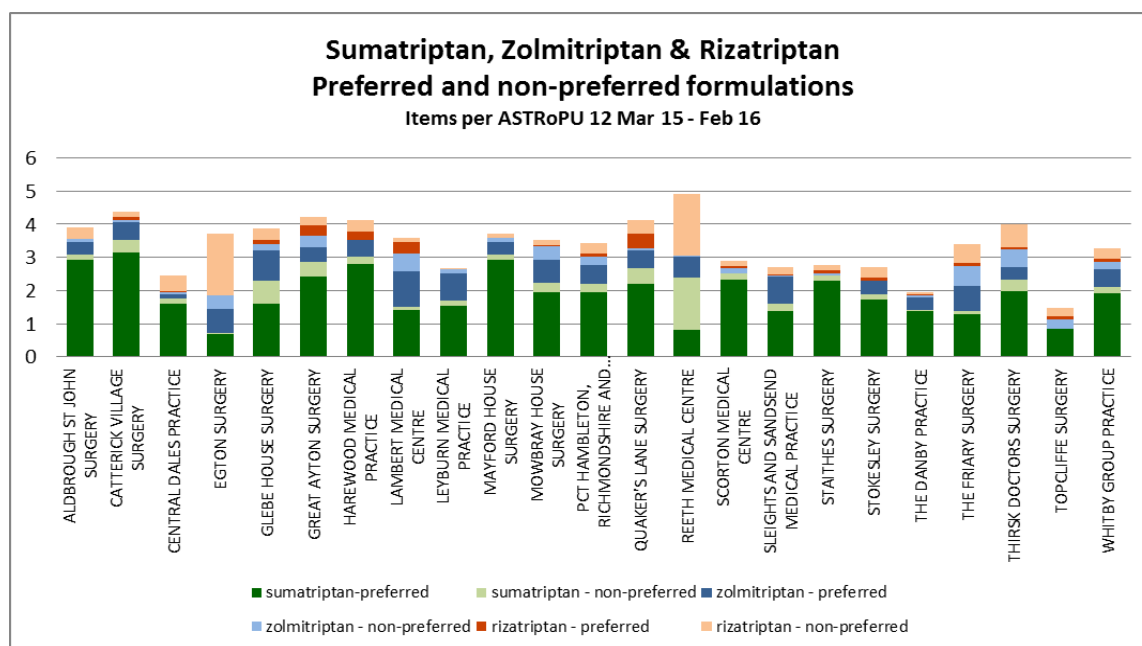
- Practices are asked to review their prescribing of Rizatriptan and Zolmitriptan and switch patients to generic versions where possible and appropriate.
- Where a dispersible formulation is necessary the generic orodispersible preparation is preferred over the generic or branded 'oral lyophilisates' formulation.
- When starting new patients on rizatriptan or zolmitriptan, practices are asked to initiate patients on plain and generic versions where appropriate.

Practice data



Breakdown of products and formulations prescribed

The graph below shows total weighted items for sumatriptan, zolmitriptan and rizatriptan per practice. The higher the bar, the higher the weighted items prescribed by the practice. Each bar is split into the 3 drugs. Darker colours are preferred preparations (generic plain & generic low cost orodispersible tablets) and lighter colours are non-preferred (nasal, injections, higher cost dispersible and all branded preparations).



HRW versions of SystmOne and EMIS formularies will be amended to incorporate this recommendation. For practices that have OptimiseRx, messages will be added to reflect this topic. A protocol for the switch from rizatriptan oral lyophilisates to rizatriptan orodispersible is in production and will be available shortly.

Local community pharmacies have been e-mailed to inform them that practices will be undertaking this switch. As the timings of the switch will vary among practices it is advisable to notify local pharmacies in advance of the switch to enable effective management of stock.

Yours sincerely,

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