

Mesalazine modified release (MR) prescribing

Additional resources available



Bulletin



Data pack



Patient letter

<http://www.prescqipp.info/resources/viewcategory/259-branded-mesalazine-prescribing>

Nationally the prescribing of generic mesalazine and branded Asacol® MR 400mg and 800mg tablets costs the NHS over £30 million per year (ePACT, January to March 2014). Following a review of the literature, changes have been made to the recommendations on interchangeability of oral mesalazine preparations. The BNF now states that there is no evidence to show that any one oral preparation of mesalazine is more effective than another.¹

Key recommendations

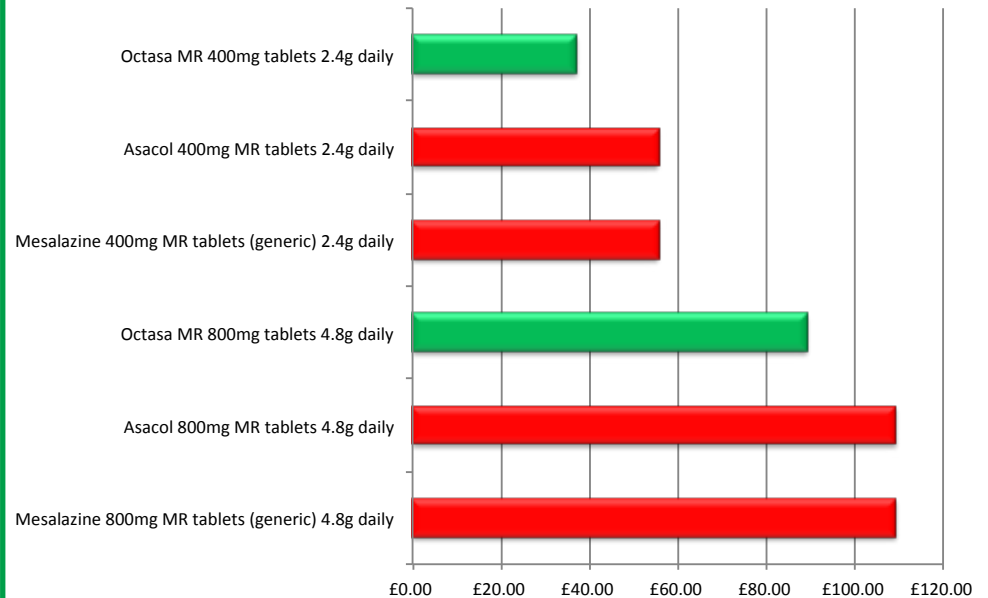
- Prescribe by brand name Octasa® MR tablets 400mg and 800mg for all new patients requiring oral mesalazine MR tablets. Treatment should be in line with NICE guidance and guidance from the British Society of Gastroenterology.²⁻⁴
- Review all patients currently prescribed generic mesalazine MR 400mg and 800mg tablets for suitability for switching to branded Octasa® MR 400mg and 800mg tablets.
- Review all patients prescribed Asacol® MR 400mg and 800mg tablets by brand name with a view to a potential switch to Octasa® MR 400mg and 800mg tablets (managed in conjunction with gastroenterologists).
- As with all switches this should be tailored to the individual patient. If switching a patient to a different brand of mesalazine, the patient should be advised to report any changes in symptoms.¹

Supporting evidence

- Following a review of the literature, changes have been made to the recommendations on interchangeability of oral mesalazine preparations. There is no evidence to suggest that any one oral preparation of mesalazine is more effective than another.¹
- Octasa® MR 400mg tablets and 800mg tablets are a generic version of the Asacol® branded tablets. They have virtually the same in vitro dissolution profile, pH for release, site of drug release and same formulation, however the Asacol® brand are significantly more expensive.^{1,5}
- The Drug Tariff bases the payment for generic prescribing of mesalazine MR 400mg and 800mg tablets on the higher cost Asacol® brand and therefore generic prescribing has a greater cost implication for the NHS.

Costs and savings

Chart 1: 28 day cost for prescribing mesalazine MR tablets at the maximum daily dose



Switching from prescribing generic mesalazine MR and Asacol® MR to prescribing Octasa® MR 400mg and 800mg tablets could save £6.7 million per year nationally. This equates to £11,771 per 100,000 patients

References

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