

Methylphenidate extended release (12-hour) tablet formulation shortage update and advice (5/9/2024)

Brand names

- Concerta (18mg, 27mg, 36mg, 54mg)
- Methylphenidate Teva ER (18mg, 27mg, 36mg, 54mg)

A current supply outlook across both brands of methylphenidate extended release can be found on the medicine notice for methylphenidate extended release on our website www.pharmac.govt.nz/methylphenidate

Please see below for advice and recommendations for patients.

The below guidance can be used at your clinical discretion

Patients new to medication treatment:

Please do not start any new patients on a methylphenidate extended-release formulation unless absolutely necessary. Instead consider alternative shorter duration methylphenidate formulations, i.e. immediate release tablets, or one of the 8-hour formulations Ritalin LA or Rubifen SR (note below the release profiles of these two formulations are different).

Patients currently treated with a methylphenidate extended-release formulation:

Make an individual case by case decision. You may wish to consider the following:

- can the patient/parent/carer liaise with their usual pharmacy to establish whether they are expecting deliveries of their required strength of methylphenidate?
- is the patient's prescribed strength anticipated to have an upcoming shortage?
- is a treatment break an option?
- is an alternative formulation of methylphenidate an appropriate interim measure?
- is an alternative formulation appropriate to switch to over a longer period?
- does the patient have an appropriate Special Authority approval.

Legal requirements for GPs and nurse practitioners

The regulations outline that, legally, any registered medical practitioner or nurse practitioner may prescribe methylphenidate products for ADHD, when acting on the written recommendation of a registered psychiatrist or paediatrician.

[Restriction on the Supply of Methylphenidate—Approval to Prescribe, Supply and Administer \(Approval No.: 2015/AP001\) - 2015-go760- New Zealand Gazette](#)

Medsafe has confirmed that this approval notice, issued under regulation 22 (Misuse of Drugs Regulations), applies to the chemical 'methylphenidate'– it does not apply to a specific presentation/brand of methylphenidate.

This means the legal requirements to prescribe a methylphenidate presentation are satisfied whether or not the specialist recommendation was written for 'methylphenidate' or for a specific presentation of methylphenidate.

GPs and nurse practitioners can legally apply for a Special Authority for a methylphenidate presentation required to manage a patient's care due to supply issues. Noting that other eligibility criteria in Pharmac Special Authority for stimulant treatments would need to be met.

This relates to the **legal situation** only. From a clinical perspective, GPs and nurse practitioners may still need specialist advice to change presentations of methylphenidate and any important clinical considerations for an individual patient.

If you are unsure if your patient has a special authority for the presentation/brand, you can call Sector Operations [0800 855 066](tel:0800855066)

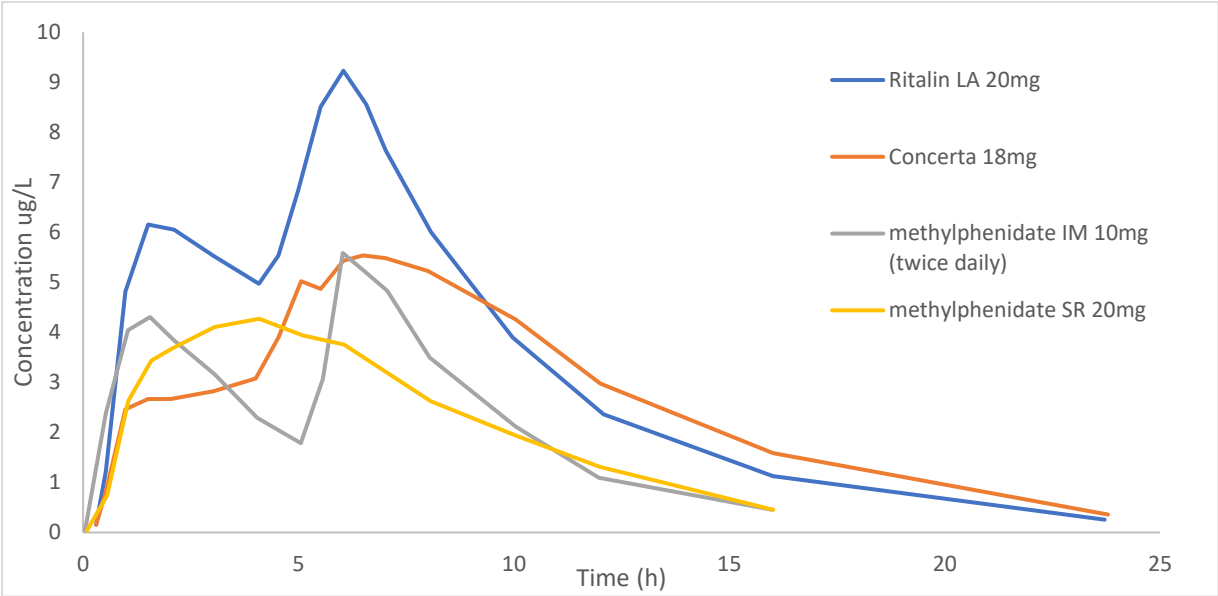
Dose equivalence of methylphenidate presentations available

The table below shows the daily dose of the 12-hour formulations of methylphenidate (extended release) and the equivalent total daily dose if switching to an 8-hour formulation of methylphenidate. However, remember that while the daily exposure to an equivalent dose will be the same, if switching from a 12-hour formulation to the same total dose as an 8-hour formulation, the exposure to that dose will occur over a shorter period of time, and the release profile will be different (see below for pharmacokinetics of different methylphenidate presentations).

Our clinical advisors have outlined that an 8-hour formulation combined with an immediate release formulation later in the day could be considered for people that require a 12-hour dose duration.

Formulation	Immediate release tablets	12-hour tablet	8-hour 50:50 release capsule	8-hour sustained release tablet
Brand names	Rubifen Ritalin	Concerta ER Methylphenidate Teva - ER	Ritalin LA	Rubifen SR
Equivalent total daily doses (in mg)	5	-	-	-
	10	-	10	-
	15	18	-	-
	20	-	20	20
	-	27	-	-
	30	36	30	-
	40	-	40	40
	45	54	-	-
	50	-	50	-
60	72*	60	60	
* unlicensed doses				

Pharmacokinetics of different methylphenidate formulations



Adapted from Markowitz et al, Clin Pharmacokinet. 2003;42(4):393-401; and Patrick KS et al, Biopharmaceutics & Drug Disposition. 1989; Mar-Apr;10(2):165-71.
IM = immediate release
SR= sustained release