

Medicines Optimisation


Prescribing Memo

Diclofenac - Safety Concerns

Date: 14th June 2013

Memo Number: 10/13

The MHRA have issued a press statement in response to the European Medicines Agency recommendation that patients with serious underlying heart conditions, such as heart failure, heart disease, circulatory problems, or a previous heart attack or stroke should not use diclofenac. This is due to a small increased risk of heart attack and stroke.

Although diclofenac will continue to provide safe and effective pain relief for many patients, the MHRA consider it to be no longer suitable for certain at-risk groups. Such warnings have been included in patient and healthcare information for some time [Drug Safety Update \(October 2012\)](#)  and are currently being updated.

The MHRA have advised that patients with underlying heart conditions currently taking diclofenac should speak to their GP or pharmacist at their next routine visit to consider an alternative pain relief treatment. Patients with cardiovascular risk factors such as high blood pressure, raised cholesterol, diabetes and smoking should only use diclofenac after careful consideration with their GP or pharmacist.

The MHRA will be shortly issuing updated information to patients and healthcare professionals.

Main Points

- Patients with underlying heart conditions currently taking diclofenac should speak to their GP or pharmacist at their next routine visit to consider an alternative pain relief treatment.
- Patients with cardiovascular risk factors such as high blood pressure, raised cholesterol, diabetes and smoking should only use diclofenac after careful consideration with their GP or pharmacist
- The MHRA will be shortly issuing updated information to patients and healthcare professionals.

Further information can be found on the EMA website in their press release of 14th June 2013
This can be found at [Press statement: MHRA responds to EMA recommendation on diclofenac](#)