**Contact details: 01772 287877**

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Dosulepin, formerly known as Dothiepin (brand name *Prothiaden*®) is a tricyclic antidepressant (TCAD). In December 2007, the Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA) issued safety advice around prescribing of Dosulepin related to the narrow margin between therapeutic doses and potentially fatal doses.

Dosulepin should NOT be prescribed for any indication because the evidence supporting its tolerability relative to other antidepressants is outweighed by an increased cardiac risk and toxicity in overdose.

This recommendation is further supported by a current safety warning on Optimise Rx and a Do Not Prescribe (DNP) RAG status which can be accessed through the [Lancashire and South Cumbria Formulary](https://www.lancashireandsouthcumbriaformulary.nhs.uk/chaptersSubDetails.asp?FormularySectionID=4&SubSectionRef=04.03.01&SubSectionID=B100&drugmatch=7906#7906).

NHSE issued guidance on items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care. This can be found at the following site [Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care](https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-policy-guidance/). It includes the following advice on prescribing Dosulepin:

* **Do not initiate**
* **Deprescribe in patients currently prescribed this medicine**
* **Prescribe ONLY if no other item or intervention is clinically appropriate/available following a multidisciplinary team discussion**

Prescribing in the Northwest is significantly higher than the national average however,there has been some recent work in LSC with excellent outcomes. Please see additional resources at the bottom of this page.

Prescribers are reminded that:

* **Dosulepin has a very small margin of safety between the (maximum) therapeutic dose and potentially fatal doses.**
* **Compared with other TCADs, overdose with Dosulepin is associated with a relatively high rate of mortality due to fatal cardiac arrhythmias, convulsions and respiratory arrest.**
* **Dosulepin is more toxic in overdose than other TCADs. A toxic dose of Dosulepin is considered 3mg/kg in adults. All children who have ingested any amount of Dosulepin must be referred for assessment.**

Dosulepin should not be stopped abruptly unless serious side-effects have occurred. To support prescribers with the review and the safe deprescribing of Dosulepin, Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust have produced the following guidance [Guidelines for Primary Care: Review of Dosulepin](https://www.lancashireandsouthcumbriaformulary.nhs.uk/docs/files/Dosulepin%20Guidance%20for%20Primary%20Care.%20%20Nov%202023%20Final.pdf?UNLID=30183617520254713213).

**Additional resources**

PrescQIPP: [Bulletin 310: Dosulepin](https://www.prescqipp.info/our-resources/bulletins/bulletin-310-dosulepin/) (may require login)

NICE guidance: [Depression in adults: treatment and management](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng222/resources/depression-in-adults-treatment-and-management-pdf-66143832307909)

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NHS England (NHSE) guidance on items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care – ***Dosulepin***

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**E) guidance on items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care – Dosulepin**

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