

Carbocisteine and Its Use as a Mucoytic

Prescribing tip for actioning by practice team



Carbocisteine (Mucodyne®) is a mucolytic agent licensed for use as adjunctive therapy in respiratory tract disorders characterised by excessive, viscous mucus, including chronic obstructive airways disease.

The use of carbocisteine is contraindicated in patients with active peptic ulceration and should be used with caution in the elderly and in those with a history of gastroduodenal ulcers, or those taking concomitant medications known to cause gastrointestinal bleeding. If gastrointestinal bleeding occurs, patients should discontinue medication.

[The summary of product characteristics for carbocisteine](#) recommends that the dosage is based upon an **initial daily dosage of 2250 mg carbocisteine (6 capsules) in divided doses, reducing to 1500 mg (4 capsules) daily in divided doses when a satisfactory response is obtained.**

[Lancashire Medicines Management Group COPD prescribing guidance](#) recommends for patients with a chronic productive cough that **a 4-week trial of a mucolytic is considered.** Carbocisteine 375mg - 2 capsules three times a day reducing to 2 capsules twice daily if a good response is seen.

[NICE guidance \(NG115\)](#) recommends

- Mucolytic drug therapy should be considered for people with a chronic cough productive of sputum.
- Mucolytic therapy should only be continued if there is symptomatic improvement (for example, reduction in frequency of cough and sputum production).
- Mucolytic drugs should not be routinely used to prevent exacerbations in people with stable COPD.

Advice for prescribers/practice

- Identify patients who are currently prescribed carbocisteine (Mucodyne®) capsules on a regular repeat prescription.
- Check to see when the use of carbocisteine was last reviewed and whether an improvement in symptoms has been documented.
- If there is no evidence of a review being undertaken flag this so that this can be picked up at the next COPD review.
- Consider stopping treatment where no improvement in symptoms has been seen.
- In patients where a satisfactory improvement has been observed and treatment is to continue check to see that the dose of carbocisteine has been reduced to four capsules a day.

To contact the Medicines Optimisation Team please phone 01772 214302