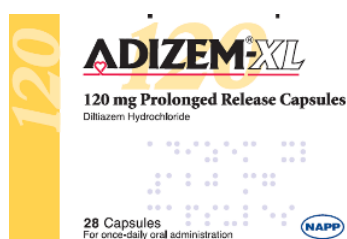


Prescribing tip for actioning by practice

## Diltiazem modified-release (MR) preparations >60mg - prescribing by brand

As stated in the BNF and SPS, **modified release Diltiazem containing more than 60 mg\* should always be prescribed by brand**, rather than generically. Different versions of modified-release preparations containing >60mg diltiazem hydrochloride may not have the same clinical effect. To avoid confusion between these different formulations of diltiazem, prescribers should specify the brand to be dispensed. (1)



A recent EMIS update (July 20) should help to ensure that all Diltiazem MR products are now only issued by brand. Information from the 'EMIS now' bulletin is as follows: *The BNF recommends that diltiazem modified-release preparations should be prescribed by brand. To restrict generic prescribing of these preparations, **the prescribing picking lists have been changed.** If the generic name is used in a keyword search only available branded preparations will be returned. If the brand name is used, only branded preparations will be returned. Unlicensed preparations which do not have a branded equivalent will still be available to prescribe using the generic name.*

Prescribing data as of May 2020 indicates that there are many patients still being prescribed >60mg diltiazem MR generically. **In Chorley and South Ribble there were 221 out of 633 Diltiazem >60mg MR prescriptions prescribed as generic, in Greater Preston this was 142 out of 529.**

This information is from openprescribing.net and data on here is available to practice.

It is important to **check with your patient's community pharmacy** when switching to prescribing Diltiazem MR by brand, as the pharmacy dispensing this medication may have notes on their systems as to what brand they dispense to the patient to ensure consistency on their part. In addition, **contacting the patient to ask what brand they receive** can help in ensuring as much consistency as possible.

\*The standard formulations containing 60 mg diltiazem hydrochloride are licensed as generics and there is no requirement for brand name dispensing (BNF). Therefore, brand name prescribing is applicable for all strengths >60mg.

[https://www.sps.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/UKMi\\_QA\\_Brand-name\\_prescribing\\_Update\\_Nov2017.pdf](https://www.sps.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/UKMi_QA_Brand-name_prescribing_Update_Nov2017.pdf)

References: 1. <https://bnf.nice.org.uk/drug/diltiazem-hydrochloride.html>

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