NHS
West Essex
Clinical Commissioning Group

RIFAXIMIN (Targaxan®) for preventing episodes of overt hepatic encephalopathy in Adults – Prescribing Support

- **Rifaximin 550mg tablets (Targaxan®) is licensed for the reduction in recurrence of episodes of overt hepatic encephalopathy in patients ≥ 18 years of age.**
- **Treatment should be initiated only under hospital or specialist supervision.**
- **Rifaximin is generally well tolerated; it may cause a reddish discolouration of the urine.**
- **No specific monitoring is recommended as part of this therapy.**

Licensed Indication

Rifaximin (Targaxan®) is indicated for the reduction in recurrence of episodes of overt hepatic encephalopathy in patients ≥ 18 years of age.

MOPB Decision August 2016

Rifaximin 550mg is approved for use in line with NICE TA337. It is recommended as an option for second line add on therapy when lactulose alone has proved ineffective or lactulose is contra-indicated.

Treatment should be **initiated only under hospital or specialist supervision**.

Dosage

Rifaximin 550mg tablet twice a day.

Contraindications

- Hypersensitivity to rifaximin, rifamycin-derivatives or to any of the excipients.
- Cases of intestinal obstruction.

Drug interactions

- **Ciclosporin**: plasma concentration of rifaximin increased by ciclosporin[1]
- **Warfarin**: rifaximin may affect anticoagulant effect of warfarin. Monitor INR and adjust Warfarin as necessary[2]
- **Oral oestrogenic contraceptives**: Due to the effects of rifaximin on the gut flora, the effectiveness of oral oestrogenic contraceptives could decrease after Rifaximin administration. However, such interactions have not been commonly reported. It is recommended to take additional contraceptive precautions, in particular if the oestrogen content of oral contraceptives is less than 50 micrograms[3]

In vitro data show that Rifaximin did not inhibit the major cytochrome P-450 drug metabolizing enzymes[2].

Adverse effects

Rifaximin is a non-absorbed (<1%) rifamycin antibacterial. It is generally well tolerated; common adverse effects listed in the SPC include depression, dizziness, headache, dyspnea, abdominal pain upper, abdominal distension, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, ascities, rashes, pruritis, muscle spasms, arthralgia and peripheral oedema[2].

Patients should be informed that despite the negligible absorption of the drug, like all rifamycin derivatives, rifaximin **may cause a reddish discolouration of the urine**.

For Full details, please consult the British National Formulary or Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC).

Monitoring

No specific monitoring is required

References

1. British National Formulary https://bnf.nice.org.uk/drug/rifaximin.html [Accessed 5.9.18]
2. Rifaximin Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC). Tagaxan® https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/2976 [Accessed 5/9/18]
3. The East of England Priorities Advisory Committee - guidance statement: Rifaximin (Targaxan®) for preventing episodes of overt hepatic encephalopathy https://www.prescqipp.info/rifaximin-targaxan-for-preventing-episodes-of-overt-hepatic-encephalopathy-he/category/181-rifaximin-targaxan-for-preventing-episodes-of-overt-hepatic-encephalopathy-he
4. NICE TA377 Rifaximin for preventing episodes of overt hepatic encephalopathy Published 25th March 2015 https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta337

With Acknowledgements to Cambridge University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Addenbrooke's Hospital Cambridge;
Adopted West Essex September 2016; Updated September 2018; Review date September 2020