衞生署藥物辦公室
藥物資訊及進出口管制科
香港九龍觀塘巧明街 100 號
Landmark East 友邦九龍大樓
20 樓 2002-05 室

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
DRUG OFFICE
DRUG INFORMATION AND
IMPORT/EXPORT CONTROL DIVISION
Suites 2002-05, 20/F, AIA Kowloon Tower,
Landmark East, 100 How Ming Street,
Kwun Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong

電話號碼 Tel. No.: (852) 3974 4175
詢問處 Enquiries (852) 3974 4175
傳真號碼 Faxline No.: (852) 2803 4962
本署檔號 OUR REF.:

(來函請敍明此檔案號碼) DH DO DIMC/7-30/1
(IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE THIS FILE REF.)

28 Mar 2024

Dear Healthcare Professionals,

Ezetrol (ezetimibe) and the risks of drug-induced liver injury and severe cutaneous adverse reactions

Your attention is drawn to the Health Canada's announcement that Ezetrol (ezetimibe) may cause drug-induced liver injury (DILI) and severe cutaneous adverse reactions (SCARs), including Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS), toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN), and drug reaction with eosinophilic and systemic symptoms (DRESS).

The Market Authorization Holder conducted a review of international safety data and the scientific literature and identified 42 post-marketing cases of DILI in patients taking Ezetrol, including a Canadian case of liver injury associated with ezetimibe monotherapy. There was sufficient evidence to suggest a causal association between ezetimibe monotherapy and DILI. Therefore, the current recommendation to consider performing liver function tests at the initiation of, or during treatment with, Ezetrol in combination with a statin or fenofibrate has been expanded to include Ezetrol monotherapy.

The review also identified rare cases of SCARs in patients taking Ezetrol. There was sufficient evidence to suggest at least a reasonable possibility of a causal association with some cases of SJS, TEN, and DRESS.

Healthcare professionals are advised to:

- Consider performing liver function tests at the initiation of Ezetrol, whether administered as monotherapy or in combination with a statin or fenofibrate, and subsequently as required.
- Instruct patients to immediately contact a healthcare professional if they experience symptoms of liver injury. Liver function should be evaluated if liver injury is suspected.
- Instruct patients to stop taking Ezetrol and to seek immediate medical help if they experience

symptoms of SCARs.

The Canadian Product Monograph (CPM) for Ezetrol has been updated to include warnings about these serious adverse reactions. Health Canada will work with the manufacturers of generic versions of ezetimibe to update their respective CPMs.

Please refer to the following website in Health Canada for details:
https://recalls-rappels.canada.ca/en/alert-recall/ezetrol-ezetimibe-and-risks-drug-induced-liver-injury-and-severe-cutaneous-adverse

In Hong Kong, there are 21 registered pharmaceutical products containing ezetimibe. All products are prescription-only medicines. So far, with regard to ezetimibe, the Department of Health (DH) has received 6 cases of adverse drug reaction, of which one case was reported as acute hepatitis. All of the 6 cases were not related to SCARs. In light of the above Health Canada's announcement, the matter will be discussed by the Registration Committee of the Pharmacy and Poisons Board.

Please note that this letter serves as a means for the DH to communicate important new safety information about registered pharmaceutical products with healthcare professionals in Hong Kong and is not intended to serve as guidelines or to replace professional clinical judgement. Healthcare professionals are advised to balance the risk of possible adverse effects against the benefit of treatment.

Please report any adverse events caused by drugs to the Clinical Trials and Pharmacovigilance Unit of the DH (tel. no.: 2319 2920, fax: 2319 6319 or email: adr@dh.gov.hk). For details, please refer to the website at Drug Office under "ADR Reporting": http://www.drugoffice.gov.hk/adr.html. You may wish to visit the Drug Office's website for subscription and browsing of "Drug News" which is a monthly digest of drug safety news and information issued by Drug Office.

Yours faithfully,

p.p. (Terence MAN)
for Assistant Director (Drug)