

Gateway Reference: 6730

13 June 2006

Wellington House
133-155 Waterloo Road
London
SE1 8UG

Dear Colleague

Human Tetanus Immunoglobulin

The availability of Human tetanus immunoglobulin (TIG) for prophylaxis is currently extremely limited in the UK. One manufacturer (Baxter Healthcare) has been unable to continue to supply the UK market. The other supplier, Bio Products Laboratory (BPL), has consequently nearly exhausted its stock of TIG.

BPL is holding a small amount of intramuscular TIG for emergency treatment of established tetanus only. Supplies are unlikely to be restored before July, and may not be restored before August 2006.

If hospitals do not have adequate supplies of TIG, the Department of Health recommends the use of combined tetanus, low dose diphtheria and polio vaccine (Revaxis). This should be administered where TIG would normally have been indicated, although this may not generate a response quickly enough to prevent tetanus at the shorter end of the incubation period. It may be prudent for clinicians to have a lower threshold for antimicrobial treatment/prophylaxis of tetanus prone wounds according to local protocols. Records of patients for whom TIG would have normally be recommended should indicate clearly if they do not receive it, as they may be at increased risk of re-attending with tetanus at a later stage, to ensure early diagnosis.

Supplies of Revaxis for this use should be obtained direct from Sanofi Pasteur, or you should place orders direct with hospital branches of AAH, Unichem and Mawdsley Brooks as part of your hospital contract.

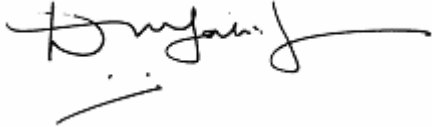
If preferred, hospitals can import TIG on the basis of a Clinical Emergency after the approval by the MHRA. You would need to notify the MHRA and follow the instructions given for Import of Unlicensed Medicines given on the MHRA website.

http://www.mhra.gov.uk/home/idcplg?IdcService=SS_GET_PAGE&nodeId=161

There are several importers with the necessary Import Licenses, who can import this product on your behalf. Clinical Emergency cases are not subject to the same timelines, which apply to other unlicensed imports, and these are processed more rapidly than other cases.

Information on procurement by Public bodies is contained in the Introduction to the EU Procurement Rules on the Office for Government Commerce website.
<http://www.ogc.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1004559>

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Salisbury', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr D M SALISBURY CB FRCP FRCPCH FFPHM
Director of Immunisation Policy, Monitoring and Surveillance

This document has been authorised by the Department of Health: **Gateway reference no: 6730**