



Please distribute to all physicians, dentists, oral & maxillofacial surgeons and/or podiatrists.

Date: October 27, 2017

To: AHS Physicians

From: Dr. Francois Belanger, Vice President, Quality and Chief Medical Officer, AHS

Re: Emergent Drug Shortage – Normal saline and Dextrose mini-bags

There is currently a global shortage of Dextrose 5% - 50 mL and 100 mL mini-bags and Sodium chloride 0.9% - 50 mL and 100 mL mini-bags, including those manufactured by Baxter. The duration of the shortage is unknown.

This shortage is worldwide. To avoid critical shortage, strict restriction in usage is essential at this time. Physicians, pharmacy and nursing staff **MUST** implement Sodium chloride and Dextrose mini-bags conservation strategies when appropriate:

- Use alternative routes of administration, when clinically appropriate:
 - Switch IV medications to oral formulations (e.g. furosemide). Consult Pharmacy as needed.
 - Administer medications via IM and/or SC injections or IV direct. (e.g., dimenhydrinate, metoclopramide, furosemide). Refer to the AHS Provincial Parenteral Monographs for further information.
- Reserve mini-bags for medication administration only.
 - For IV lock flushes, utilize prefilled normal saline flush syringes.
 - When setting up IV infusion lines, use alternate size bags (e.g. 250 mL, 500 mL, 1000 mL) to flush.
 - Do not use mini-bags for other purposes (e.g., heating packs).
- Ensure premixed solutions (e.g. clindamycin, gentamicin, and metronidazole) are being utilized where possible.

For more information, please contact pharmacy services at your site or Dr. Gerald Lazarenko (403) 607-3937. Please share this information with your teams and colleagues.