

Brand change notification

Sumatriptan

(50 mg & 100 mg tablets)

Dear patient

Recently a decision was made to change the subsidies for the antimigraine treatment sumatriptan 50 mg & 100 mg tablets. This means that soon, only Arrow-Sumatriptan will be subsidised and if you currently take Sumagran or Imigran, you will need to change the brand you are taking.

The information below may help answer some questions you may have about this change.

Will the medicine work the same?

Yes.

Your medicine itself is not changing, only the brand. Arrow-Sumatriptan tablets have been funded for some time and contain the same amount of active ingredient (sumatriptan) as both Sumagran and Imigran. This means that you should have the same effect from taking Arrow-Sumatriptan as you do from taking either Sumagran or Imigran.

Medsafe, the agency that approves medicines for use in New Zealand, approved Arrow-Sumatriptan after carefully considering the safety and effectiveness of this medicine.

You shouldn't notice any difference in how you feel after taking Arrow-Sumatriptan compared with Sumagran or Imigran. **If you do notice any major changes or side effects, please talk with your doctor about it.**

When will the change occur?

From 1 February 2010, a part payment may be required for Sumagran and Imigran. Arrow-Sumatriptan will remain fully subsidised.

From 1 May 2010, only Arrow-Sumatriptan will be available fully subsidised. Both Sumagran and Imigran will no longer be subsidised.





Imigran 50 mg



Sumagran 50 mg



Arrow Sumatriptan 50 mg



Imigran 100 mg



Sumagran 100 mg



Arrow Sumatriptan 100 mg

Will my current brand be available after 1 May 2010?

PHARMAC cannot guarantee the availability or price of Sumagran and Imigran after 1 May 2010. Their availability will be at the discretion of the pharmaceutical suppliers (Mylan, and GlaxoSmithKline, respectively). However, after 1 May 2010, all costs of purchasing the Sumagran and Imigran brands of sumatriptan would have to be met by the patient.

Will the new brand cost me any more?

No.

Other than the usual patient co-payment, there will be no extra cost to patients for Arrow-Sumatriptan. If the suppliers of Sumagran and Imigran do not reduce their prices then you would need to pay a manufacturer's surcharge if you wish to remain on one of these products.

Will the tablets or pack look different?

Yes.

Because Arrow-Sumatriptan is made by a different supplier, the Arrow-Sumatriptan tablets will look a bit different from the Sumagran and Imigran tablets, but they will still have the same sumatriptan medicine and will work just the same.

Where can I get more information?

Please phone the PHARMAC helpline, 0800 66 00 50 (between 9 am and 4 pm weekdays). You can also e-mail brandswitch@pharmac.govt.nz with your queries and/or comments.

Your doctor and pharmacist will also help guide you during the changeover period.

