

Malta, 6th April 2010
Circular No. P03/2010

Dear Healthcare Professional,

European Medicines Agency updates warning for the interaction between clopidogrel and proton-pump inhibitors.

Following an analysis of new data concerning the possible interactions between clopidogrel and proton-pump inhibitors (PPIs), the European Medicines Agency has recommended an amendment to the existing warning over the concomitant use of clopidogrel-containing medicines and PPIs.

Clopidogrel is an antiplatelet medicine that is used to prevent problems with blood clots such as heart attacks or strokes. Clopidogrel is converted in the body to its active form by an enzyme called CYP2C19. PPIs are medicines that are used to prevent and treat heartburn and stomach ulcer. As heartburn and stomach ulcers can occur as side effects of clopidogrel, patients taking clopidogrel often take PPIs to prevent or ease their symptoms.

In May 2009, the Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) recommended that the product information for all clopidogrel-containing medicines be amended to discourage the concomitant use of PPIs and clopidogrel unless absolutely necessary. Since then, studies have confirmed that omeprazole can reduce the levels of the active form of clopidogrel in the blood and reduce its antiplatelet effects, therefore supporting the conclusion that there is an interaction between clopidogrel and omeprazole and esomeprazole.

Taking all of the currently available data into account, the CHMP and its Pharmacovigilance Working Party have, also, concluded that there are no solid grounds to extend the warning to other PPIs. The class warning for all PPIs has been replaced with a warning stating that only the concomitant use of clopidogrel and omeprazole or esomeprazole should be discouraged. The Committee has recommended that a description of the results of the studies that show the interaction between clopidogrel and omeprazole be added to the product information.

The Medicines Authority has participated in these discussions held at the EMA and is in agreement with the full [press release](#) issued by the EMA, attached here for your perusal.

Healthcare professionals are encouraged to regularly check the Medicines Authority website for product safety updates as these are issued on an ongoing basis.