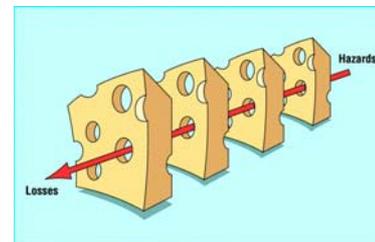


Northern Ireland Medicines Governance Team



SAFETY MEMO 9

From: Medicines Governance Pharmacists,

To:

Directors of Pharmaceutical Services / Trust Pharmacy Managers – **For Action**

Dr N Morrow, Chief Pharmacist, DHSSPSNI

Directors of Pharmacy, HSS Boards

} For Information

16th August 2005

RE: Dosing pipettes provided by manufacturers of oral liquid medications

The Medicines Governance Team have recently been made aware of a serious medication incident involving an incorrect dose of risperidone being administered via the dosing pipette supplied with Risperdal[®] Liquid.

The prescribed dose of risperidone was 250micrograms, which is 0.25ml of Risperdal[®] liquid. The actual dose administered was 2.5ml, which is 2.5mg risperidone, a ten-fold overdose. The lowest incremental marking on the dosing pipette provided is 0.5ml (500microgram), in line with the recommended doses as detailed in the Summary of Product Characteristics. The bung of the medicine bottle is designed to fit with the dosing pipette provided, so a traditional oral syringe cannot easily be used.

Where dosing devices such as pipettes are provided by the manufacturers of oral liquid medicines, these may not be conducive for measuring an unlicensed dose e.g. for children. The supply of a traditional oral syringe will only be useful where it fits the existing bottle bung.

When dispensing oral liquid medicines, pharmacy staff should:

- Check that the dosing device supplied has the necessary markings to measure the prescribed dose accurately.
- If there are no markings for that dose, either
 - Supply an oral syringe from pharmacy stock ensuring it fits the bung; or
 - Dispense the liquid into a separate bottle with a new bung and oral syringe.

All staff issuing medicines to patients/carers should ensure that they understand the dose and can use the dosing device provided. Ask them to show you the dose that they will administer.

Please contact your Medicines Governance Pharmacist if you wish to discuss any of these issues further.

Tracey Boyce, Team Leader

On behalf of the Medicines Governance Team