

**Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care**

Public Health Division
Public Health Protection and
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**Ministère de la Santé
et des Soins de longue durée**

Division de la santé publique
Direction de la protection de la santé publique
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JUL 17 2009

Dear Pharmacist:

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) would like to review the policies/procedures in place for patients to acquire medications used in the treatment of tuberculosis (TB) due to infection with organisms included in the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex.

TB First Line Treatment Medications

First line drugs are available to TB patients free of charge from their local public health unit. Physicians, pharmacists and hospitals should have patients acquire the medications through their local health unit. The usual practice is for the physician to send the patient to the local health unit to obtain these medications. However, if the patient is inadvertently sent to the pharmacist, the pharmacist should refer the patient to the health unit, unless the pharmacist has already established a process to obtain the medication from the health unit to dispense to the patient free of charge.

Patient claims for these medications should not be submitted to the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) program and PATIENTS SHOULD NOT BE CHARGED FOR THESE MEDICATIONS.

The following are the first line drugs provided by the the local health unit:

Ethambutol HCL Tab 100mg
Ethambutol HCL Tab 400mg
Isoniazid Tab 100mg
Isoniazid Tab 300mg
Isoniazid syrup 10mg/m L
Pyrazinamide Tab 500mg
Pyridoxine HCL Tab 25mg
Rifampin Cap 150mg
Rifampin Cap 300mg

TB Second Line Treatment Medications

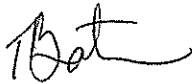
Medications that are used for resistant TB, or because of drug interactions, side effects, or co-morbidities, are referred to as second line TB drugs. These drugs are also provided free of charge for patients; however, these drugs must initially be purchased by the health care service provider (hospital, pharmacy, health department). The health care service provider sends the invoice to their local health unit who, in turn, invoices the ministry. Once again, claims for these patients for these medications should not be submitted to the ODB program.

If you receive a prescription for first line TB drugs, please contact you local health unit. For a listing of your local health unit, please follow this link:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/contact/phu/phuloc_dt.html

Thank you for your cooperation in the proper procurement of TB medications.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Bateman', written in a cursive style.

Tiffany Bateman, RN, BScN
Nurse Consultant,
Infectious Diseases Prevention and Control Unit