

Position Statement for High Strength Fluoride Toothpastes

Indication: Prophylaxis of Dental Caries

Recommendation:

Routine prescribing of high strength fluoride toothpaste is not recommended in Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB except:

- on the advice of a secondary care specialist, in patients who have had surgery, radiotherapy and/or chemotherapy, who are unable to access a primary care dentist (see [LSCMMG guidance](#))
- where the patient falls under the general exemptions of the [NHS England Over the Counter Guidance](#).

NB. Where prescribing is recommended, clinicians other than dentists working in primary care should not prescribe high strength fluoride toothpaste where dentists could reasonably treat the patient.

Background

- The British Medical Association (BMA) has produced guidance to inform GPs of their obligations to patients requesting NHS prescription drugs for the treatment of dental problems.
- The BMA recommends that GPs should not attempt to manage a condition requiring dental skills unless they have appropriate training. [1]
- Prevention of dental caries is included by NHS England (NHSE) in the list of minor conditions associated with pain, discomfort and/fever which should not routinely prescribed for in primary care. [2]
- NHSE advise that a prescription for high fluoride OTC toothpaste should not routinely be offered in primary care as the condition is appropriate for self-care.
- NHSE include general exemptions where treatment is recommended in primary care.
- The LSCMMG has produced separate guidance recommending the prescribing of high fluoride toothpaste on the advice of a secondary care specialist, in patients who have had surgery, radiotherapy and/or chemotherapy, who are unable to access a primary care dentist. [3]

References

- [British Medical Association, "Patients presenting with dental problems," September 2020. [Online].
1 Available: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/gp-practices/gp-service-provision/patients-presenting-with-dental-problems>. [Accessed November 2023].

- [NHS England, "Policy guidance: conditions for which over the counter items should not be
2 routinely prescribed in primary care," 2024. [Online]. Available:
] <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/policy-guidance-conditions-for-which-over-the-counter-items-should-not-be-routinely-prescribed-in-primary-care/> [Accessed August 2025].

- [Lancashire and South Cumbria Medicines Management Group, "Medicines Colour Classification
3 Change Proposal Duraphat / sodium fluoride 1.1% toothpaste," August 2023. [Online]. Available:
] <https://www.lancashireandsouthcumbriaformulary.nhs.uk/docs/files/Fluoride%20toothpaste%20for%20web%20site.pdf?UNLID=565956612025829105149>. [Accessed August 2025].