



Date: May 25, 2023

To: Physicians, Midwives, Nurses, and Perinatal Program Leaders

From: Perinatal Services BC and PHSA Pharmacy Procurement

RE: Erythromycin Shortage & Update on SOGC Misoprostol Statement

Erythromycin 250mg tabs and 333mg caps have been discontinued by their manufacturers. As a result, there is an ongoing shortage and a limited availability of erythromycin. Currently, there are no manufactured sources of erythromycin available in Canada.

As a result, it is now recommended to use **azithromycin 1 gram PO x 1 dose** to replace the usual 2 day IV and 5 day oral course of erythromycin as a part of the PPRM latency antibiotic regimen. Azithromycin has a long half-life and there is a greater body of evidence supporting the use of a single dose of oral azithromycin.

All other antibiotics (both IV and oral routes) within the PPRM management regimen remain unchanged and should continue to be used in conjunction with azithromycin.

- i.e. **standard use of ampicillin IV x 48 h, followed by 5 days of PO amoxicillin**

GBS prophylaxis should continue to be followed when clinically indicated

- GBS prophylaxis in the context of unknown or GBS positive status is covered by IV Ampicillin, no additional penicillin is required. If confirmed GBS negative, the ampicillin IV x 48hours and 5 days of PO amoxicillin is still given

Summary for PPRM: Azithromycin 1 gram PO for one dose AND IV ampicillin for 2 days, followed by 5 days of oral amoxicillin.

Furthermore, the SOGC recently released a statement about a potential shortage of Misoprostol [SOGC Statement on Potential Misoprostol Shortage](#) across Canada. The PHSA pharmacy procurement team has been in communication with Health Canada and there continues to be stock available at pharmacy distributors across the province, with additional stock expected to be available by May 26th/2023. Additionally, hospitals across British Columbia continue to have stock available for use. **We do not expect there to be an interruption in availability of Misoprostol in British Columbia.**

Please contact Perinatal Services BC at psbc@phsa.ca if you have any questions.