

Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) for Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free – corresponding guidance on endorsement, prescription charges, remuneration and reimbursement plus Q&A.

SSP 078 for Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free

1) Endorsement

The contractor must endorse the prescription form or Electronic Reimbursement Endorsement Message (EREM) as per Clause 9, Part II of the Drug Tariff.

Electronic prescription:

Where SSP endorsement functionality is available on the dispensing system the contractor must select SSP and input the three-digit reference number. The contractor must also select in the system the SSP item that has been supplied.

Example	Endorsement
	Option
<p>Prescription for Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free x 100ml</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor supplies Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension x 100ml</p>	<p>SSP 078</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor selects in system Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension x 100ml</p>

Non-electronic prescription form:

Example	Endorsement
	Option
<p>Prescription for Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free x 100ml</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor supplies Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension x 100ml</p>	<p>SSP 078</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor endorses Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension x 100ml</p>

2) Prescription charges

Pharmacy contractors must take one prescription levy. Only one prescription charge will be applicable for patients who are not exempt from prescription charges.

3) Remuneration

Supply in accordance with this SSP 078 will result in the following fees being paid to the contactor:

- One Single Activity Fee (£1.27)
- One SSP fee (£5.35)

4) Reimbursement

The supplied product in accordance with this SSP 078 will be reimbursed as if it was dispensed against a prescription. In this instance, contractors will be reimbursed the Part VIII A reimbursement price for the quantity supplied for Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension.

Q&A

Will the SSP apply to cross-border prescriptions?

Yes. Patients from England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland who present their prescriptions for Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free are eligible to receive a substituted product under the terms of this SSP 078.

Does the SSP apply to private prescriptions?

Yes. The scope of this SSP 078 applies to valid prescriptions that meets the requirements of the Human Medicine Regulations 2012, so it would cover both NHS and private prescriptions, unless where it stated otherwise on the SSP itself.

Will prescription charges apply under the SSP?

Yes, patients who are not exempt from prescription charges would continue to pay for this as usual. The only circumstance in which patients would not have to pay for a prescription charge is where an SSP recommends a lower quantity to be supplied.

Please note that the SSP for Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free does not recommend a lower quantity to be supplied, so patients will continue to pay prescription charges (unless they are already exempt). For more information, please see the above guidance.

How would the pharmacists determine whether the sugar containing oral solution is appropriate to be supplied in accordance with this SSP?

The pharmacist will need to discuss with the patient/carer **and** use their professional judgment when determining what should be supplied in accordance with this SSP 078. For diabetic patients supply sugar free options where you can. If this is not available, pharmacists should let the patient/carer know there is a small amount of sugar contained in the product supplied, which may marginally affect blood sugar control, but treatment should not be withheld.

Pharmacy contractors should note that Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free is a special container and should endorse the prescription accordingly.

Can pharmacists use their professional judgement to supply an alternative product to patients?

Supply in accordance with this SSP 078 only allows supply of a specific substitution up to the duration of treatment prescribed. However, if the pharmacist thinks that an alternative product would be suitable for the patient, they should either contact the prescriber to discuss this (with the patient's consent) or direct the patient back to the prescriber.

Does the SSP apply to other antibiotics?

No, this SSP 078 only applies to prescriptions for Cefalexin 250mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free.