Importation of US-Labelled Acyclovir Sodium Injection 50 mg/mL due to Shortage of Canadian-Labelled Acyclovir Sodium Injection 50 mg/mL

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Audience:
Healthcare professionals including physicians, infectious disease specialists, pharmacists, chiefs of medicine in hospitals, Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Emergency Room (ER) medical staff.

Key messages:

- **There is an unprecedented demand and shortage of Acyclovir sodium injection in Canada.**
- **Acyclovir is an antiviral agent. Given the medical necessity of this product in Canada, Health Canada has added Acyclovir sodium injectable formats to the List of Drugs for Exceptional Importation and Sale. The added products are US-labelled Acyclovir sodium injection 50 mg/mL in 10 mL and 20 mL vials - imported by Auro Pharma Inc.**
- **US-labelled Acyclovir sodium injection 50 mg/mL (10 mL and 20 mL vials) does NOT contain preservatives and comes in a single use vial format.**
- **Special attention is required to ensure correct patient dosing and administration.**
  - **Infusion concentrations of 7 mg/mL or lower are recommended.**
  - **Higher concentrations (e.g., 10 mg/mL) may produce phlebitis or inflammation at the injection site upon inadvertent extravasation.**
- **For reconstitution and dilution recommendations for Acyclovir sodium injection, consult the package insert prior to administration.**
- **Despite the differences listed below between this US-labelled product and Canadian approved products, the product is similar to Acyclovir sodium injection solutions currently marketed in Canada with respect to the actual drug product content, name (Acyclovir sodium injection), strength (50 mg/mL), volume (10 mL and 20 mL vials), and presentation (IV).**

Issue:

Increased demand for Acyclovir sodium injection due to the COVID-19 pandemic has led to reported shortages and limited supply of this product in Canada. Given the medical necessity of Acyclovir sodium injection and increased demand to manage critically ill patients, Health Canada has added US-labelled Acyclovir sodium injection (50 mg/mL) to the List of Drugs for Exceptional Importation and Sale, as an interim measure to help mitigate the shortage.

Products affected:

US-labelled Acyclovir sodium injection 50 mg/mL in 10 mL and 20 mL vials distributed by AuroMedics Pharma LLC .

Background information:

In Canada, Acyclovir sodium injection 50 mg/mL is indicated for:

- Herpes Simplex infections in immunocompromised patients
- Initial episodes of Herpes Genitalis
- Varicella-Zoster infections in immunocompromised patients
- Indicated for the treatment of initial and recurrent mucosal and cutaneous Herpes Simplex (HSV-1 and HSV-2) infections and varicella-zoster (shingles) infections in immunocompromised adults and children.

Information for healthcare professionals:

Healthcare professionals are advised that:

- The key formulation and labelling characteristics of US-Labelled Acyclovir sodium injection 50 mg/mL in 10 mL and 20 mL are indicated in the table below.

Product Name	**Acyclovir Sodium Injection, 50mg/mL**
Active Substance	Acyclovir Sodium
Acyclovir Concentration	**50 mg per mL**
Fill Volume	10 mL and 20 mL vials
Format	Single Use Vial
Manufacturer	AuroMedics Pharma LLC

- Health care professionals should take extra care in the preparation and administration as:
  - Infusion concentrations of 7 mg/mL or lower are recommended.
  - 70 kg adult received between 60 and 150 mL of fluid per dose.
  - Higher concentrations (e.g., 10 mg/mL) may produce phlebitis or inflammation at the injection site upon inadvertent extravasation. Standard, commercially available electrolyte and glucose solutions are suitable for intravenous administration; biologic or colloidal fluids (e.g., blood products, protein solutions, etc.) are not recommended.
  - Once diluted for administration, each dose should be used within 24 hours.
- US-labelled Acyclovir sodium injection 50 mg/mL (10 mL and 20 mL vials) does NOT contain preservatives and comes in a single use vial format, store at 20° to 25°C (68° to 77°F).

The Canadian Product Monograph should be followed for indications, dosing considerations, warnings and precautions. HOWEVER, for the reconstitution instructions, administration and storage conditions, prescribing information for the US-labelled product should be followed.

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- **The US-labelled Acyclovir sodium injection package insert, which comes along with the product, should be consulted for full prescribing information.**

Healthcare professionals can find the Canadian product information for Acyclovir sodium injection products at (https://health-products.canada.ca/dpd-bdpp/index-eng.jsp) and please refer the below link for US-labelled Acyclovir sodium injection product prescribing Information: (https://dailymed.nlm.nih.gov/dailymed/drugInfo.cfm?setid=ae921e4e-b8ae-4a45-acc1-32e5e719812b).

Important differences between US-Labelled Product & Canadian Approved Product
(Acyclovir sodium Injection, 500 mg per 10 mL & 1000 mg per 20 mL)

ondition	US-labelled Product	Canadian-approved Product
cations	1. Herpes Simplex Infections in Immunocompromised Patients 2. Initial Episodes of Herpes Genitalis **3. Herpes Simplex Encephalitis*** **4. Neonatal Herpes Simplex Virus Infection*** 5. Varicella-Zoster Infections in Immunocompromised Patients **Indications not approved in Canada.*	1. Herpes Simplex Infections in Immunocompromised Patients 2. Initial Episodes of Herpes Genitalis 3. Varicella-Zoster Infections in Immunocompromised Patients 4. Indicated for the treatment of initial and recurrent mucosal and cutaneous herpes simplex (HSV-1 and HSV-2) infections and varicella-zoster (shingles) infections in immunocompromised adults and children.
ng (HSV)	**Herpes Simplex Infections** ***Mucosal and cutaneous herpes simplex (hsv-1 and hsv-2) infections in Immunocompromised patients:*** **Adults and Adolescents (12 years of age and older)** 5 mg/kg infused at a constant rate over 1 hour, every 8 hours for 7 days. **Pediatrics (Under 12 years of age)** **10 mg/kg** infused at a constant rate over 1 hour, every 8 hours for 7 days.	**Herpes Simplex Infections** ***Mucosal and Cutaneous Herpes Simplex (HSV-1 and HSV-2) in Immunocompromised Patients:*** **Adults**: 5 mg/kg infused at a constant rate over at least 1 hour, every 8 hours for 7 days in adult patients **with normal renalfunction.** **Children:** In children under 12 years of age, equivalent plasma concentrations are attainedby infusing **250 mg/m2** at a constant rate over at least 1 hour, every 8 hours for 7 days.
ng (VZV)	**Varicella-Zoster Infections in Immunocompromised Patients:** **Adults and Adolescents (12 years of age and older)** 10 mg/kg infused at a constant rate over 1 hour, every 8 hours for 7 days. **Pediatrics (Under 12 years of age)** **20 mg/kg** infused at a constant rate over 1 hour, every 8 hours for 7 days. **Obese Patients** Obese patients should be dosed at the recommended adult dose using ideal body weight.	**Varicella-Zoster Infections in Immunocompromised Patients:** **Adults:** 10 mg/kg infused at a constant rate over at least 1 hour, every 8 hours for 7 days in adult patients **with normal renal function.** **Children:** In children under 12 years of age, equivalent plasma concentrations are attained by infusing **500 mg/m^2** at a constant rate over at least 1 hour, every 8 hours for 7 days. Obese patients should be dosed at 10 mg/kg (Ideal Body Weight). A maximum dose equivalent to 500 mg/m^2 every 8 hours should not be exceeded for any patient.
inistration	Acyclovir Sodium Injection is for **intravenous infusion only.**	Acyclovir Sodium Injection is for **slow intravenous infusion only, over a period of at least 1 hour.**

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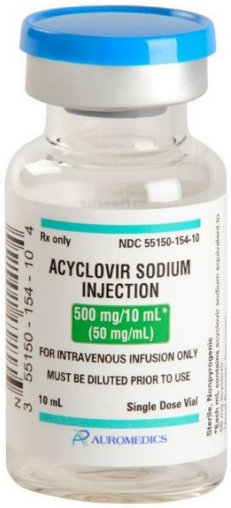
IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT US-LABELLED PRODUCT
(Acyclovir sodium Injection, 500 mg per 10 mL & 1000 mg per 20 mL)

Acyclovir Sodium Injection, 500mg per 10mL	Acyclovir Sodium Injection 1000mg per 20 mL
	

Available strengths	500mg per 10 mL & 1,000mg* per 20 mL *1,000mg represents One Thousand Milligrams. **Caution**: Use extra care when calculating dosages before administration of the product.
Storage	Store at **20° to 25°C (68° to 77°F).**
Shelf-life	18 months (for both formats i.e., 500mg/10mL & 1000mg/20mL vials)
Latex & Preservatives Information	Vial stoppers are not made with natural rubber latex. Product is latex-free.
Dilution Instructions	Dilute to 7 mg/mL or lower prior to infusion. **Caution: This US product will not be populated in Canadian medication use systems or smart pumps and thus extra care when calculating dosages and administering this product will be required.**
Barcode Scanning	• Institutions should confirm that barcode systems provide correct information when the product is scanned. The barcode used on Acyclovir Sodium Injection is an international pharmaceutical manufacturing code and may not be appropriately recognized by scanning systems used in Canada. • Please note that the US-labelled product does not have a DIN • Proper selection of this product must be confirmed to avoid confusion with other products

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Report health or safety concerns:

Health Canada's ability to monitor the safety of marketed health products depends on healthcare providers and consumers reporting adverse reactions and medical device incidents. Any adverse reaction in patients receiving Acyclovir sodium injection 50 mg/ mL should be reported to Auro Pharma and/or Health Canada.

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Adverse Reactions associated with the use of US-labelled acyclovir sodium injection can be reported to Health Canada at https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health- products/medeffect-canada/adverse-reaction-reporting.html or by calling toll-free at 1-866-234- 2345.

Original signed by

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