

From the Chief Medical Officer:
Dr Henrietta Campbell CB



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

An Roinn

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

URGENT COMMUNICATION

HSS(MD)45-2004

All General Practitioners – for cascade to Practice Staff including
Practice Nurses and Sessional Doctors
Community Pharmacists
Directors of Nursing in HSS Boards
Directors of Nursing in HSS Trusts – for cascade to Health Visitors,
Midwives, Community Children’s Nurses, and Paediatric and
Community Dietitians
Medical Directors of HSS Trusts – for cascade to Consultants in
Paediatrics and Community Paediatrics
GP Advisers in HSS Boards
Prescribing Advisers in HSS Boards
Directors of Public Health in HSS Boards
Health Promotion Agency Northern Ireland (Ms Janet Calvert)
Directors of Primary Care in HSS Boards – for cascade to OOH
Services
Directors of Pharmaceutical Services in HSS Boards & Trusts
Regional Medicines & Poisons Information Service
Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland
Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre

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Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Date: 22 December 2004

Dear Colleague

WITHDRAWAL OF PREGESTIMIL® BY MEAD JOHNSON NUTRITIONALS

This Department has just received information about the withdrawal of Pregestimil®, powdered infant formula, from the International Market by Mead Johnson Nutritionals. Attached is the communication from the Department of Health in London to inform healthcare professionals of this development.

Local information on good practice in the preparation of formula feeds and the sterilisation of feeding equipment is available within HSS Boards and Trusts. For further information on access to this local information and leaflets please contact your local HSS Health Promotion Resource Centre. Alternatively you may wish to draw the attention of parents/carers to the leaflet *Bottle Feeding* on the Department of Health’s web-site, which is identified in this communication.

Yours sincerely

HENRIETTA CAMPBELL (DR)
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

JUDITH HILL (MISS)
CHIEF NURSING OFFICER

NORMAN MORROW (DR)
CHIEF PHARMACEUTICAL OFFICER

This letter is available at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk and also on the DHSSPS Extranet which can be accessed directly at <http://extranet.dhsspsni.gov.uk> or by going through the HPSS Web at <http://www.n-i.nhs.uk> and clicking on DHSSPS.

From: **Dr Fiona Adshead - Director, Health Improvement Directorate/Deputy Chief Medical Officer - Department Of Health, England**

Date: **22 December 2004**

Reference: **CEM/CMO/2004/13**

Withdrawal of Pregestimil® by Mead Johnson Nutritionals

The Department for Health and the Food Standards Agency wish to make Health Professionals aware of a full trade withdrawal of Pregestimil® powdered infant formula from the international market by Mead Johnson Nutritionals.

Mead Johnson Nutritionals has withdrawn the product following a possible link to four cases of *Enterobacter sakazakii* infection in infants in a hospital in France, which led to the death of two infants. *E. sakazakii* is an opportunistic pathogen that poses little risk to healthy, term infants. Specifically, infants at greatest risk of *E. sakazakii* infection are pre-term infants, low birth weight infants, and immuno-compromised infants. Previously *E. sakazakii* infections have been associated with poor hygiene and storage of reconstituted powdered infant formula but in this instance, it has not yet been detected in Pregestimil. As a precautionary measure, the company has withdrawn the product worldwide. Further investigations are continuing in France to identify the source of the infection. The batch of the product under investigation was not distributed in the UK and supplies of Pregestimil in UK are not implicated

Pregestimil® is a hydrolysed protein formula usually prescribed for infants who have fat and/or protein malabsorption. As it will not be available in the UK until further notice, health professionals are advised to prescribe other suitable alternatives. Dispensing pharmacists should direct parents/carers of such infants to contact their doctor as soon as possible to obtain prescriptions for a suitable alternative formula.

Those infants currently being fed Pregestimil can continue until an alternative prescription is obtained. Health professionals should re-emphasise to parents the importance of good hygiene practices in preparing formula feeds from powdered formula and follow instructions set out in the leaflet *Bottle Feeding* available on the Department of Health website. In particular, it is important to store made-up formula in the coldest part of the fridge preferably at 5°C for no more than 24 hours and throw away any left over milk.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4084371&chk=Q/6Wx2