

Hot Tips: Public Health Advisory #149 Date: 7/28/2025

Please copy and distribute to ALL physicians at your location.

Bicillin® L-A Recall and Shortage

Key Messages

- The FDA has announced a shortage of long-acting penicillin G benzathine injectable suspension products (Bicillin® L-A).
- A voluntary [recall](#) has also been issued for specific lots of Bicillin® L-A (Penicillin G Benzathine Injectable Suspension).
- Penicillin G benzathine is the primary treatment for syphilis in most forms, but is the only treatment recommended for use in pregnant patients following syphilis exposure or infection.
- Providers are urged to contact Ventura County Public Health immediately in the event that you encounter a pregnant patient requiring treatment for syphilis and are unable to procure penicillin G benzathine. Our staff can be reached at 805-981-5201 for assistance in securing treatment for the patient.
- Due to the current shortage, alternate treatment in the form of doxycycline should be considered for all non-pregnant persons exposed to or infected with syphilis.

Situation

State and federal officials have provided notice of a national shortage of penicillin G benzathine injectable suspension products (Bicillin L-A®). The FDA has yet to provide a timeline for the estimated shortage duration. In addition, Pfizer has issued a voluntary recall of certain lots of Bicillin® L-A (1.2 and 2.4 MU doses) which were distributed between 12/1/2023 and 6/24/2025. These lots were recalled in response to visual findings of particulates in the syringes. A table containing detailed information about the recalled products can be found within the latter portion of this notice (Table 1).

Benzathine penicillin G is the only recommended treatment for pregnant persons that have been exposed to or infected with syphilis. It is crucial that the drug is prescribed appropriately to ensure that supply of this treatment remains available for this susceptible group. Prompt treatment with benzathine penicillin G is essential in preventing the effects of congenital syphilis in infants. If left untreated, congenital syphilis could lead to deformed bones, anemia, enlarged organs, jaundice, skin rashes and brain and nerve issues – including meningitis, blindness or deafness. It could also lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, prematurity, low birth weight, or neonatal death shortly after birth.

During this shortage, the recommended treatment for *non-pregnant* individuals diagnosed with syphilis includes the following:

- Doxycycline 100 mg PO BID x 14 days – acceptable for treatment of primary, secondary, or early latent syphilis.
- Doxycycline 100 mg PO BID x 28 days – acceptable for treatment of latent syphilis or syphilis of unknown duration.

Considering the current Bicillin® L-A drug shortage, this drug should be reserved for use in the following cases:

- Treatment of pregnant people with syphilis infection or exposure.
- Treatment of infants exposed to syphilis in utero.
- In vulnerable populations, where compliance to a daily, oral medical is not possible.
- A medically compelling reason that doxycycline cannot be used in an individual.

The FDA has also temporarily approved the importation of Extencilline® and Lentocilin® for use as alternative long-acting penicillin-based treatments which remain available during this shortage. Instructions for the use of these products, as well as status updates regarding the current Bicillin® L-A shortage, can be found at [Drug Shortages | FDA](#).

Providers throughout Ventura County are advised to contact Ventura County Public Health to review all cases involving pregnant persons exposed to or infected with syphilis. Our staff is able to assist with various resources aimed at facilitating treatment of these patients. In addition to providing penicillin G benzathine as needed, our team is able to conduct a review of each patient’s past or current titers, and history of previous treatment, in order to identify the stage of infection and determine the corresponding treatment plan.

Table 1.

Carton NDC	Syringe NDC	Lot Number	Expiration Date YYMMDD	Strength	Configuration/ Count
60793-701-10	60793-701-02	GL2954	270131	1,200,000 units/ 2 mL	10 (2 mL) syringes per carton, 24 cartons per shipping case
		HP6222	270131		
		HP6228	271031		
		HP6232	270930		
		HR9967	270531		
		HJ3235	260930		
		LT5190	270930		
60793-702-10	60793-702-04	GT2598	260930	2,400,000 units/ 4 mL	10 (4 mL) syringes per carton, 24 cartons per shipping case
		GT2599	260930		
		HR9969	270430		
		HK2909	270228		
		HR9984	270831		

Resources

- [CDPH STI treatment guidelines](#)
- [Prenatal Syphilis Prevention and Treatment Considerations Pocket Card](#)
- [Special Considerations for the Treatment of Syphilis using Alternative Therapies in Non-pregnant Persons](#)
- [Powdered Benzathine Benzylpenicillin \(Extencilline®\) for the Treatment of Syphilis](#)

This bulletin is intended to improve the public health in our county by keeping physicians and nurses informed of noteworthy diagnoses, disease trends, and other events of medical interest. Another goal of a public health department is to educate. We hope that you will use this information to increase your awareness. Please allow us to continue in our role of speaking to the press so that we may maximize the educational message to the benefit of all citizens of Ventura County.