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To:

Pharmacist Incharge, Armed Forces Hospital (AT Khoudh & Salalah)
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, Royal Hospital
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, Khoula Hospital
Pharmacist Incharge, Al Nahda Hospital
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, Muscat Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, Al Dakhliya Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, South Batinah Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, North Batinah Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, Al Dhahira Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, North Sharqiya Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, South Sharqiya Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, Musandam Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, Dhofar Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, Al Wusta Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGHS, Buraimi Governorate
Director of Pharmaceutical Care, DGMS
Pharmacist Incharge, Al Massarah Hospital
HOD, Pharmacy Department, Sultan Qaboos University Hospital
Pharmacist Incharge, Royal Oman Police
Pharmacist Incharge, The Diwan
Pharmacist Incharge, The Sultan's Special Force
Pharmacist Incharge, Internal Security Services
Pharmacist Incharge, Petroleum Development of Oman
Pharmacist Incharge, LNG Oman

After Compliments,

Kindly find attached our Circular No 53 dated 14/05/2026 Regarding Update to Health Care Professionals About Nasal decongestant sprays and drops containing xylometazoline hydrochloride / oxymetazoline hydrochloride: increased risk of rebound congestion, rhinitis medicamentosa, and tachyphylaxis with overuse.

Copy to:

- Director of Pharmacovigilance Department, DSC
- Director of Medicine Registration Department, DSC
- Director of Regulatory Compliance Department, DSC
- Director of Central Quality Control Lab., DSC
- Director of Medical Device Department, DSC
- Section Head of Medicine Safety Evaluation
- Section Head of Quality Problems and Medication Errors.
- Section Head of Pharmacovigilance
- Section Head of Clinical Trials



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Drug Safety Center



ص ب: ٣٩٣ مسقط - الرمز البريدي: ١٠٠ - هاتف: ٢٢٣٥٧١١١ - فاكس: ٢٢٣٥٨٤٨٩
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Circular No. **53/2026**

27-11-1447 H
14-05-2026

Subject: Nasal decongestant sprays and drops containing xylometazoline hydrochloride / oxymetazoline hydrochloride: increased risk of rebound congestion, rhinitis medicamentosa, and tachyphylaxis with overuse

The Drug Safety Center (DSC) would like to share a new safety information published by Medicine and Health products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) regarding Nasal decongestant sprays and drops containing xylometazoline hydrochloride / oxymetazoline hydrochloride: increased risk of rebound congestion, rhinitis medicamentosa, and tachyphylaxis with overuse.

Xylometazoline and oxymetazoline are sympathomimetic medicines used for the symptomatic relief of nasal and sinus congestion associated with the common cold, sinusitis, and allergic rhinitis in adults and children 6 years and above. They are also used for the treatment of symptoms of flu in adults and children 12 years and above.

The terms 'rebound congestion' and 'rhinitis medicamentosa' are often used interchangeably, as both describe nasal congestion resulting directly from heavy or prolonged use of nasal decongestant sprays containing xylometazoline and oxymetazoline. Although both conditions cause nasal congestion, they differ in their duration and symptoms.

Rebound congestion is a temporary response that occurs when nasal passages become swollen due to excessive use of nasal decongestant sprays containing xylometazoline and oxymetazoline. The condition is characterised by a 'rebound effect', in which the nasal passages become more congested after the effect of the medication wears off.

Rhinitis medicamentosa is a chronic condition that develops through prolonged or extended use of nasal decongestant sprays. With continued use of these medicines, rebound congestion can worsen and progress to rhinitis medicamentosa, the most serious of these reported effects. The condition is characterised by severe nasal congestion together with visible changes to the nasal mucosa and other internal nasal structures. Additional symptoms may include itchy nasal passages, sneezing, and a runny nose. In severe and untreated cases, this can result in irreversible structural changes within the nasal passages that may require surgical intervention to correct. Unlike other types of rhinitis which may affect the ear, throat, and eyes, rhinitis medicamentosa is confined to the nasal passages.

Tachyphylaxis refers to an acute sudden decrease in response to a drug after its administration, which leads to rapid onset of drug tolerance.



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Oman Vision

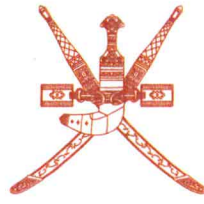
Advice for Healthcare Professionals:

- **rebound congestion, rhinitis medicamentosa, and tachyphylaxis** through overuse are recognised side effects with nasal sprays and drops containing xylometazoline or oxymetazoline when used beyond the maximum recommended duration.
- patients may mistakenly interpret a rebound congestion effect as a continuation of the original congestion when it is a response to prolonged use of the product.
- advise patients and their caregivers that xylometazoline and oxymetazoline are for **short term** use only and advise against prolonged or extended use beyond 5 days.
- advise patients and their caregivers **not to exceed** the daily recommended dose and to take note of the minimum dosing interval stated in the product information.
- if the symptoms of nasal congestion **persist, worsen** or do **not improve after 5 days**, alternative treatment may be required.
- patients experiencing **rebound congestion or related side effects** may feel the need to continue using the products, leading to a cycle of overuse. Opportunistically review patients who may have become reliant on using these products and advise them on how to gradually stop using these medications. **Stopping abruptly** can worsen symptoms, but patients typically recover within 3 months with early recognition and treatment.
- **rhinitis medicamentosa** is the most serious of these reported effects and is associated with persistent nasal congestion and longer-lasting changes to the nasal mucosa or structures of the nose. Symptoms may not resolve quickly after stopping the decongestant and, in severe cases, may require surgical intervention. Look out for patients presenting with severe nasal congestion and visible changes to the nasal mucosa or other internal nasal structures. Associated symptoms may include nasal irritation or itching, sneezing, and a runny nose. Management may require a tailored treatment plan, including gradual withdrawal of the decongestant, use of alternative therapies, and clinical follow-up to monitor recovery.
- use of the nasal sprays or drops containing xylometazoline or oxymetazoline is **contraindicated** in patients who are taking other oral and nasal forms of sympathomimetic decongestants.
- the product information will be transitioning over the next few months towards strengthened warnings regarding these side effects and to advise that they should not be used for more than 5 days.

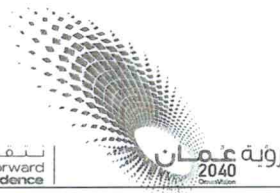


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Advice for Healthcare Professionals to Provide to Patients:

- nasal sprays and drops containing xylometazoline and oxymetazoline are used to help clear a blocked nose, caused by cold, flu and allergies.
- only use these medicines for a **short time** and to help with your symptoms. You should follow the instructions for use in the Patient Information Leaflet and package labelling which comes with the medicine and to **not exceed the daily recommended dose** and to take note of the minimum time interval between doses.
- **do not** use these medicines **for more than 5 consecutive days**.
- if you use these medicines for longer than the recommended duration, your nose may become blocked again, and you may get other problems such as runny nose, sneezing, itching and irritation on the inside of the nose or your body can stop responding to the medicine.
- these side effects may make you feel like you need to keep using the medication to manage your symptoms – talk to a healthcare professional if you are having trouble stopping the medication, or are using for longer or more than recommended.
- contact your doctor if your symptoms worsen or you do not feel better after 5 days, as you may need a different treatment.
- **do not use** xylometazoline or oxymetazoline together or with other oral and nasal forms of medicines used to treat a blocked nose, such as pseudoephedrine, phenylephrine or ephedrine.
- it is **important** to read the Patient Information Leaflet that comes with your medicine and information on the outer packaging and to talk to a healthcare professional if you experience side effects.

Call to report:

Nasal decongestant sprays and drops containing xylometazoline hydrochloride / oxymetazoline hydrochloride are registered in Oman, healthcare professionals, patients, and caregivers are requested to submit adverse drug reaction reports to the pharmacovigilance department in the Drug Safety Center.


Ph. Ibrahim Nasser Al Rashdi
Director General

