



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Region IV Public Health
Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Wahkiakum counties
and Cowlitz Tribe

Health Advisory

Please deliver a copy of the accompanying alert to each provider in your organization.

Thank you

Questions regarding this alert may be directed to the office of:

Alan Melnick, MD, MPH
Health Officer

Clark County Public Health
Cowlitz County Health Department
Skamania County Health Department
Wahkiakum County Department of Health and Human Services
(360) 397-8412

Please Distribute

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for specific incident for situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Region IV Public Health
Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Wahkiakum counties
and Cowlitz Tribe

HEALTH ADVISORY

August 17, 2012

TO: Physicians and other Healthcare Providers

FROM: Alan Melnick, MD, MPH, CPH, Health Officer

RE: **Oral Cephalosporins No Longer a Recommended Treatment for Gonococcal Infections**

Last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released updated treatment guidelines for gonorrhea, summarized below:

- Evidence from CDC's Gonococcal Isolate Surveillance Project (GISP) suggests that cefixime is becoming less effective in treating gonorrhea.
- Consequently, CDC no longer recommends cefixime at any dose as a first-line treatment for gonorrhea.
- CDC recommends combination therapy with a single intramuscular dose of ceftriaxone 250 mg plus either a single dose of azithromycin 1 g orally as a single dose or doxycycline 100 mg orally twice daily for 7 days
- However, because of the high prevalence of tetracycline resistance among GISP isolates, particularly those with elevated minimum inhibitory concentrations to cefixime, azithromycin is preferred as the second antimicrobial.
- For all patients with gonorrhea, every effort should be made to ensure that the patients' sex partners from the preceding 60 days are evaluated and treated for gonorrhea with a recommended regimen. If heterosexual partners of a patient cannot be linked to evaluation and treatment in a timely fashion, then expedited partner therapy (EPT) should be considered, using oral combination antimicrobial therapy for gonorrhea (cefixime 400 mg and azithromycin 1 g) delivered to the partner by the patient, a disease investigation specialist, or through a collaborating pharmacy.
- A test-of-cure should be conducted one week after treatment, especially if cefixime is used. Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing (NAAT) or cultures can be used for test-of-cure.

The full text of the CDC's recommendations can be seen at

http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6131a3.htm?s_cid=mm6131a3_e%0d%0a

Recommendations for providers in Washington State:

- All providers who use cefixime should switch to the single intramuscular dose of ceftriaxone 250 mg plus a single dose of azithromycin 1 g orally. We do not recommend using doxycycline as the second agent because resistance is more common and it appears to be less effective.
- Washington State will continue to use EPT for all patients with gonorrhea except men who have sex with men (MSM).

- Infertility Prevention Project (IPP) clinics should always use ceftriaxone as the first-line treatment for gonorrhea.
- All patients should be rescreened at 12 weeks. Test-of-cure should be done on all patients with continued symptoms.
- For patients treated with cefixime and azithromycin, we recommend test-of-cure within 7-14 days after treatment for pregnant women and persons with pharyngeal gonorrhea.

If you have any questions, please contact your local health department.

- Clark County Public Health: (360) 397-8182
- Cowlitz County Health and Human Services: (360) 414-5599
- Skamania County Community Health: (509) 427-3850
- Wahkiakum County Health and Human Services (360) 795-6207

Thank you for your partnership.