This leaflet can be sent electronically via email or text and saved to the patient record.

**Information about changes to medicines or treatments on the NHS: Changes to trimipramine prescribing**

The NHS has issued guidance asking doctors to stop or greatly reduce the prescribing of some medicines. This is because the medicines are:

* Not as safe as other medicines OR
* Not as good (effective) as other medicines OR
* More expensive than other medicines that do the same thing

**One of these medicines is trimipramine.**

This document will explain why the changes are happening and where you can get more information and support.

## Why does the NHS want to reduce prescribing of trimipramine?

Trimipramine belongs to a group of medicines used to treat depression

called “tricyclics”.

In its guidance on depression, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends that a different family of antidepressants called “SSRIs” should be the first choice of treatment, rather than tricyclics.

SSRIs don’t have as many side effects as tricyclics and they are safer.

If SSRIs don’t work and a tricyclic antidepressant is needed, then there are

alternatives that are far less expensive than trimipramine. The price of

trimipramine has increased a lot so it is not good value for money for the NHS.

You can talk to your doctor about the options available so that you can come to a joint decision about what’s best for you.

Trimipramine is used as a painkiller for a very small number of patients.

However, it is not licensed\* for this use and there are other alternative,

licensed painkillers available.

**\***Having a licence means that a medicine has passed tests to ensure that it is effective, safe and manufactured to appropriate quality standards.

## What options are available instead of trimipramine?

You can talk to your doctor about the options available so that you can come to a joint decision about what’s best for you.

There are now many alternative antidepressants to trimipramine. It’s also possible that you will no longer need to take an antidepressant at all.

If you are taking trimipramine for pain relief, there are also several

alternatives available.

## You may suffer side effects if you stop taking trimipramine suddenly. Your

## doctor will support you to gradually reduce your dose of trimipramine before

## you stop and slowly introduce a new medicine (if you are to be prescribed

## one).

## Where can I find more information and support?

* You can speak to your local pharmacist, GP or the person who prescribed the medication to you
* Your local patient group: [Find your local Healthwatch | Healthwatch](https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/your-local-healthwatch/list?title=Healthwatch+Bath+%26+North+East+Somerset+%28BANES%29&Search=Search)
* National and local charities can offer advice and support, for example MIND: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/drugs-and-treatments/antidepressants/about-antidepressants/>
* The NICE information for patients can be found at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng222/informationforpublic>
* The Patients Association can also offer support and advice: [www.patients-association.org.uk/](https://www.patients-association.org.uk/) or call the free helpline 0800 345 7115
* Healthwatch: [www.healthwatch.co.uk](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk)

Find out more about the medicines that are being stopped or greatly reduced: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/medicines/items-which-should-not-be-routinely-prescribed/>

Find out more about licensed and unlicensed medicines: <https://www.gov.uk/drug-safety-update/off-label-or-unlicensed-use-of-medicines-prescribers-responsibilities>