

Alternative to Sinemet during shortage

An alternative product to the Australian registered medicine Sinemet CR[®] is now available on a temporary basis under Section 19A of the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989.

According to Merck Sharp & Dohme (Australia) Pty Ltd Sinemet CR[®] is in short supply due to a manufacturing constraint with a third-party contractor. This affects Australia as well as other countries.

The alternative product is registered and marketed in the United Kingdom under the brand name Sinemet CR 50 mg/200mg Prolonged-Release Tablets.

This alternative product is now available in Australia until the end of August 2020. Community pharmacies may back-order the medication.

The new tablets come blister packs of 60 rather than bottles of 100.

If your script calls for supply of 100 then the pharmacist will have to open another pack to make up the correct number.

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) will reimburse purchase of 1.7 packs.

Although the new tablets have a score line, they should not be halved. Swallow tablets whole, with a glass of water. In order to maintain the slow-release properties do not chew or crush the tablets.

Australian product information for recommended dosing and notes on potential adverse reactions are available here: <https://www.ebs.tga.gov.au/>.

Consult your doctor about the availability and suitability of this alternative medication for your use.

For more information, phone the Parkinson's NSW InfoLine: **1800 644 189**