

**Medicines Management Team Advisory Summary**

Prescribing OMEGA-3 supplements (fish oils) on NHS prescriptions for patients post MI is **NOT RECOMMENDED** by NICE due to lack of supporting evidence. Patients currently receiving NHS prescriptions should be directed to buy OTC instead if they wish to continue to take this product

**Introduction**

The current NICE clinical guideline<sup>1</sup> on Myocardial infarction **does not recommend** the use of prescribed fish oils – Omacor<sup>®</sup> (CG48 previously supported its use post-MI, however this advice has been withdrawn due to insufficient supporting evidence)

**Formulary Status**

- OMACOR<sup>®</sup>/Prestylon<sup>®</sup> is only on BCAP formulary as an AMBER drug for a small group of patients who are: intolerant to statins, ezetimibe and fibrates with a TG level over 10 mmol/L
- It is NOT recommended for any other indication

**Recommended Actions**

- Please review patients who are receiving NHS prescriptions for Omega-3 supplements
- Patients who do not fulfil the criteria above should have their treatment stopped
- Patients should be informed they can purchase this treatment OTC if they want to continue taking it
- The NICE clinical guideline CG181<sup>3</sup> on lipid modification advises that healthcare professionals should tell patients there is no evidence that omega-3 fatty acid compounds help to prevent CVD
- The NICE clinical guideline CG172<sup>1</sup> on “MI – secondary prevention” recommends that healthcare professionals advise people who have had an MI to eat a Mediterranean-style diet but they should not routinely recommend eating oily fish for the sole purpose of preventing another MI. Moreover, the guideline recommends healthcare professionals should not offer or advise people to use omega-3 fatty acid capsules or supplemented foods to prevent another MI

**Wiltshire CCG Cost Impact**

In spite of the above, **2225 prescriptions** for “Omega-3 Acid Ethyl Esters” were issued in Wiltshire between November 2014 and November 2015. The total actual cost was **£50,375.43**

**References**

1. NICE guideline CG172: Myocardial infarction: cardiac rehabilitation and prevention of further MI (November 2013) <https://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/CG172>
2. NICE guideline CG181: Cardiovascular disease: risk assessment and reduction, including lipid modification (July 2014) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg181>