

Medication Safety Notice

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Issued by the Office of the Chief Pharmacist, SA Health

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/medicationsafety



A patient **Safety Notice** strongly advises the implementation of particular recommendations or solutions to improve quality and safety.

We recommend you inform:

- General Managers
- Pharmacy Directors
- Medical Directors
- Clinical Directors
- Nursing Directors
- Drug and Therapeutics Committees
- Medication Safety Committees
- Safety and Quality Units
- Clinical Governance

Contact details:

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Concentrated Potassium Chloride - Labelling Change and Safety Considerations

Purpose

To raise awareness of labelling changes to the outer carton of Pfizer® potassium chloride concentrate for injection ampoules.

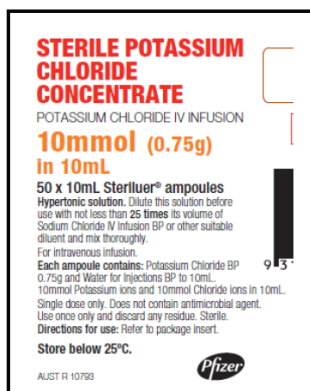
Labelling change

A recent change to sterile potassium chloride concentrate 10mmol packaging may cause confusion in clinical areas and pharmacy.

The new outer packaging labels the strength as '75mg in 1mL', whilst the older packaging describes the strength as '10mmol (0.75g) in 10mL' (see below). Potassium doses are often prescribed in millimoles, and thus the new packaging may lead to confusion.

Importantly - there are no changes to the product formulation, concentration, or labelling of the ampoules (10mmol (0.75g) in 10mL).

Old carton artwork



New carton artwork



To avoid potential confusion, Pfizer has advised it is revising the outer carton labelling for the next production batch.

Potassium chloride safety

Intravenous potassium chloride can be FATAL if given inappropriately.

Pre-mixed potassium chloride bags should always be used in preference to ampoules to reduce the risk of patient harm from inadvertent overdose. Concentrated potassium chloride ampoules are restricted to critical care areas, approved by local LHN DTCs only.

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care's national high risk [medication safety alert on intravenous potassium chloride](#) contains useful information and recommendations.

Action required by SA Health staff and services

1. Ensure all relevant staff are aware of this notice and the labelling change.
2. Consider strategies to minimise confusion, such as additional labelling on the carton and storage areas.

Further information

For any enquiries or concerns, please contact your pharmacist or pharmacy department directly; or email HealthMedicationSafety@sa.gov.au.