SAFETY ALERT

DRAP SAFTEY ALERT NO. 18

SUSPENSION OF REGISTRATIONS OF FAMOTIDINE 10MG/5ML AND 40MG/5ML LIQUID SUSPENSION

UPDATE FROM REGISTRATION BOARD, PAKISTAN.

Date: 15th of June, 2022

Target Audience:

- Provincial Drugs Control Units and Provincial Pharmacovigilance Centres.
- Manufacturer/registration holders of Famotidine 10mg/5ml and 40mg/5ml Liquid Suspension;
- Healthcare Professionals; and
- Patients, consumers or caregivers.

Problem or Issue:

The Registration Board of Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) in its 317th meeting held on 16-17th of May 2022 in light of discussions, benefit-risk analysis and public health impact suspended all drug registrations of Famotidine 10mg/5ml and 40mg/5ml Liquid Suspension under Section 7(11)(d) read with Section 42 of the Drugs Act, 1976 in the larger public interest, with immediate effect as these products were neither approved by any Reference Regulatory Authorities nor efficacy data is available with any registration holder. These products will stay suspended for a period of one (01) year; or till the time its efficacy is well established through indigenous clinical trials in accordance with the Bio Study Rules, 2017; or if it is approved by the Reference Regulatory Authorities, whichever is earlier. Likewise, Registration holders were directed to suspend the manufacturing and import of these drug products immediately and to withdraw available stocks from the market in the larger public interest. The decision applies to all registration holders of Famotidine 10mg/5ml and 40mg/5ml Liquid Suspension except those who have obtained interim relief from the Hon'ble Lahore High Court, Lahore or who have registration of Famotidine 40mg/5ml Dry Suspension.

Background:

The Registration Board in its 250th meeting held on 10th July, 2015 had decided that Famotidine 10mg/5ml Suspension is not registered in any reference regulatory agencies and the internationally available formulation is a dry powder for suspension in the strength of 40 mg/ 5 ml and asked applicants to revise their formulation as per innovator (new registration application

With complete fee) within six months if the manufacturing facility is approved by Central Licensing Board.

However, DRAP's Authority in its 70th meeting held on 05th Sep 2019 decided that **"***For formulations containing "drugs" which were previously registered by the Registration Board and have proof of availability and prescription of last 10 years but are not available in the Reference Regulatory Authorities shall continue to be considered/ registered as drugs until and unless withdrawn on Safety, Efficacy and Quality reasons".*

Accordingly, Registration Board in its 296th meeting held 8th-10th Sep, 2020 decided that *"since all such formulations which are not approved by the Reference Regulatory Authorities; the safety and efficacy profile cannot be established in the absence of a well-established system for reporting of adverse events, so a reference shall be forwarded to DRAP's Authority with the request to review the decision taken in its 70th meeting held on 05-09-2019. In this regard, PE&R Division shall prepare a comprehensive document/agenda for consideration of Authority*". It was also decided that *"For all those formulations which are registered/ applied in strengths, different from those approved by reference regulatory authorities, the registration holders/ applicants shall standardize their formulations (by submitting registration application with requisite fee, provided that the firm did not have same registration) in line with those approved by reference regulatory authorities.*

Meanwhile, the policy of reliance on reference regulatory authorities was approved by the Authority in its 73rd meeting held on 06-11-2019. Subsequently, the registration board in its 313th meetings, dated 16-18th Nov, 2021 decided to issue show-cause notices to registration holders/ manufacturers under Section 7 (11)(d) of the Drug Act, 1976 and opportunity of personal hearings. The decision of the Registration Board was endorsed by Authority in its 128th meeting of Authority held on 14th Dec 2021 and decided that "*Drug formulations/strengths which were previously registered by the Registration Board but are not available in any Reference Regulatory Authorities, shall be reviewed and disposed-off keeping in view of safety and efficacy evidence/data in the Reference Regulatory Authorities".*

In line with the decision taken by the Board in its 313th meeting, show-cause/personal hearing notices were issued to registration holders for hearing before the Registration Board on 1st February, 2022 at 2:30 pm. However, due to prevailing cases of COVID-19, personal hearings were postponed.

Many of registration holders of Famotidine 10mg/5ml and 40mg/5ml Liquid Suspension challenged the Show Cause Notices issued for cancellation of their drugs stating violation of the decision taken in the 70th Meeting of the DRAP Authority held on the 05-09-2019. However, the decision taken in the 70th Meeting of the DRAP Authority has been reviewed in the 128th Meeting held on

14-12-2021, whereby the Registration Board was allowed to review and dispose of the registration of drugs keeping in view their safety and efficacy. The Registration Board in its 315th meeting held on 1st Feb 2022 noted the information and advised to provide the opportunity of a personal hearing in the next meeting of the Registration Board.

Lastly, the Registration Board in its 317 meetings held on 16-17th May, 2022 gave an opportunity of a personal hearing and after reviewing the discussion of personal hearing, risk-benefit analysis and public health impact suspended all drug registrations of Famotidine 10mg/5ml and 40mg/5ml Liquid Suspension under Section 7(11)(d) read with Section 42 of the Drugs Act, 1976 in the larger public interest, with immediate effect, for 1 year or earlier subject to some conditions, as Famotidine Suspensions in strength/ dosage form other than 40mg/5ml Powder for Oral Suspension are neither approved by any Reference Regulatory Authorities nor efficacy data is available with any registration holder.

Therapeutic Goods Affected.

Name: **Famotidine 10mg/5ml & 40mg/5ml Liquid Suspension (not Famotidine 40mg/5ml Dry Suspension)**

Famotidine is used in gastric and duodenal ulcers, Zollinger-Ellison Syndrom, Gastro-Eesophgeal disease, heart burns, and indigestion. Whereas, in children, it is used for peptic ulcers and gastro oesophagal disease.

Advice for patients.

Patients and consumers are informed that the Registration Board of Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) in its 317th meeting held on 16-17th of May 2022 in light of discussions, benefit-risk analysis and public health impact suspended all drug registrations of Famotidine 10mg/5ml and 40mg/5ml Liquid Suspension under Section 7(11)(d) read with Section 42 of the Drugs Act, 1976, therefore, patients who are using the above-mentioned Famotidine suspensions may consult/speak with their healthcare professionals to shift/change their treatment to Famotidine 40mg/5ml Dry Suspension or other treatment options available in the market.

Advice for healthcare professionals.

Healthcare professionals are informed that the Registration Board of Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) in its 317th meeting held on 16-17th of May 2022 in light of discussions, benefit-risk analysis and public health impact suspended all drug registrations of Famotidine 10mg/5ml and 40mg/5ml Liquid Suspensions under Section 7(11)(d) read with Section 42 of the Drugs Act, 1976 in the larger public interest, with immediate effect as these products were neither approved by any Reference Regulatory Authorities nor efficacy data is available with any registration holder. Healthcare professionals may stop prescribing Famotidine 10mg/5ml and 40mg/5ml Liquid Suspension to patients. Famotidine 40mg/5ml Dry Suspension or other treatment options available in the market may be prescribed.

Guidelines for reporting Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs):

Both healthcare professionals and patients are requested to report any adverse events they have experienced with their previous treatment with Famotidine 10mg/5ml and 40mg/5ml Liquid Suspension or even with Famotidine 40mg/5ml Dry Suspension to **the National Pharmacovigilance Centre,** Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan through **DRAP Med Vigilance E-reporting system** or at npc@dra.gov.pk

Similarly, adverse events can also be reported through **Med Safety Mobile Application** that is available for download from the App store (For iOS devices) and Google Play (For Android devices).

References:

1. Partial Minutes of 317th Meeting of Registration Board.