

SUBJECT: Bicillin L-A Shortage and Potential Use of Lentocilin
Date: April 14, 2026
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To: Primary Care Providers, Hospitals
From: Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Associate Medical Officer of Health

- **Canada is experiencing a shortage of Bicillin, used for syphilis treatment.**
- **WDGPH may begin fulfilling orders with Lentocilin, an equivalent product.**
- **Locally, the supply is currently stable. If the shortage persists, we may begin fulfilling orders with Lentocilin S 1200 (1.2 million units / 4 mL).**

Lentocilin is authorized in Portugal for the treatment of syphilis. It contains the same active ingredient as Bicillin and is therapeutically equivalent. Standard syphilis treatment regimens (2.4 million units IM as 1 dose or 3 weekly doses) can be administered using Lentocilin. Lentocilin can be stored in your existing vaccine/medication fridge at 2-8°C.

Important differences between Lentocilin and Bicillin:

- Lentocilin is supplied as a powder + diluent and must be reconstituted prior to use.
- The final injection volume is 4 mL per 1.2 million units (vs. 2 mL with Bicillin L-A).
 - A 2.4 million unit dose requires two IM injections (4 mL each) at separate sites.
 - A minimum 18-gauge needle is recommended due to viscosity
- Lentocilin contains the following additional ingredients (not present in Bicillin):
 - Lidocaine 1.5% in the diluent.
 - Soy phospholipids → hypersensitivity risk in patients with soy allergy.

Syphilis Management Considerations during Periods of Shortage

Benzathine penicillin G (Bicillin or Lentocilin) remains the treatment of choice, particularly for:

- Pregnant individuals
- Neurosyphilis, ocular syphilis, or otic syphilis
- Actual or potential congenital syphilis

Health Canada and PHAC have produced [Interim Syphilis Treatment Guidelines](#) for use during a benzathine penicillin shortage. These identify lower-risk situations where doxycycline may be an alternative (e.g., non-pregnant adults with uncomplicated early syphilis). Adherence to treatment and follow-up should be considered as part of clinical judgement.

How to Order STI Medications

Please complete the [STI Medication Order Form](#) and fax to 519-823-4903. Orders for Bicillin will be filled with Bicillin and/or Lentocilin depending on availability.

For more information, please contact:

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