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## **NICE launches first ever guidance on constipation in children and young people**

*GPs welcome guidance on a condition that affects up to one in three UK children.  
MOVICOL<sup>®</sup> Paediatric Plain (macrogol 3350 + electrolytes) recommended as first line treatment.  
Use of MOVICOL<sup>®</sup> Paediatric Plain would deliver cost savings to the NHS.*

Today, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has provided clear guidance on the diagnosis and management of idiopathic constipation in children and young people.<sup>1</sup> Constipation is a condition that affects up to one in three of the UK childhood population - over 3.6 million children under the age of 16 - and accounts for up to 10% of visits to health centres.<sup>1,2,3</sup> The NICE guidance states that MOVICOL<sup>®</sup> Paediatric Plain (macrogol 3350 + electrolytes) should be used as the first line treatment for both idiopathic constipation and disimpaction.<sup>1</sup>

Evidence from clinical trials has consistently demonstrated that macrogol 3350 + electrolytes is considered to be highly effective and well tolerated in the management of childhood constipation and is well accepted by children.<sup>\*3,4,5,6</sup>

The guidance has been welcomed by GPs, who are often the first port of call for worried parents. Without early diagnosis and appropriate treatment, an acute episode of constipation can become chronic, resulting in a need for secondary care referral and invasive procedures, which can be distressing for the child and their family.<sup>1</sup> The guidance also includes a review of health economic literature and modelling, which shows that cost savings can be achieved with the use of macrogol 3350 + electrolytes, due to the high downstream costs of invasive treatment requiring hospitalisation that would be saved.<sup>1</sup>

## **NICE listens to children**

The NICE guidance on constipation in children and young people provides strategies based on the best available evidence to support early identification, positive diagnosis and timely, effective management.<sup>1</sup> The guidance can be viewed and downloaded at <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG99>

As part of the NICE guideline development process, NICE consulted children with idiopathic constipation to identify the issues most important to them. The consultation identified five main issues, which were considered in the final NICE guidance:<sup>1</sup>

- The importance of health care staff communicating in a friendly, relaxed manner and of the child being able to build up trust - this is especially important before examinations or tests
- The important role of the school nurse
- Some children may not want a family member present when having an examination and that this should be ascertained prior to one being performed
- Finding a way of taking medicine that suits the child is important, both in terms of how it tastes and the time of day it is taken
- The effect of overflow soiling is a very important and difficult issue for children. The way it limits their social life is of concern to them

## **Norgine supports GPs with educational materials**

Norgine Pharmaceuticals continues to support healthcare professionals (HCPs) involved in the management of childhood constipation. In response to the NICE guidance and the above consultation, Norgine is developing an educational pack for HCPs, which will be available in July and includes:

- A quick reference guide to the NICE recommendations
- Educational leaflets for parents, carers and children that help explain constipation in age appropriate terms
- Educational 'flash cards' to help younger or more embarrassed children talk about how they feel

Norgine is also updating its popular educational website [www.childhoodconstipation.com](http://www.childhoodconstipation.com) with a new interactive tool for parents, carers and children to educate them on the condition and help them make an informed decision about whether to seek professional help.

## About MOVICOL<sup>®</sup> Paediatric Plain

MOVICOL<sup>®</sup> Paediatric Plain (Norgine Pharmaceuticals Limited) has been available in the UK since 2007 and is indicated for the treatment of chronic constipation in children as young as two years.<sup>7</sup> It is a sugar- and flavour-free powder that is dissolved into water and can then be added to other drinks such as fruit juice to make it easier for children to take.<sup>7</sup>

It works by delivering water to the bowel, increasing the bulk of the stool which triggers the muscles of the bowels, while also lubricating and softening the stool, promoting a comfortable bowel movement.<sup>7</sup>

MOVICOL<sup>®</sup> Paediatric Plain is an effective, non-traumatic means of disimpaction in children and can be used in the long-term management of chronic constipation.

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### References

\* Minor and non serious adverse events as reported in the referenced clinical trials.

1. <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG99> Last accessed 26 May 2010.
2. <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=6> Last accessed 26 May 2010.
3. Candy D *et al.* Treatment of faecal impaction with polyethylene glycol plus electrolytes (PGE+E) followed by a double-blind comparison of PEG + E versus lactulose as maintenance therapy. *Journal of Pediatric Gastroenterology and Nutrition* 2006; 43: 65-70.
4. Hardikar W *et al.* An open study to assess the safety and efficacy of a polyethylene glycol based laxative in the treatment of severe constipation in children. Data presented at the Annual Meeting of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, Canberra, May 2004.
5. Thomson MA *et al.* Polyethylene glycol 3350 plus electrolytes for chronic constipation in children: a double blind, placebo controlled, crossover study. *Archives of Disease in Childhood* 2007; Nov; 92(11): 996-1000.
6. Pashankar *et al.* Safety of polyethylene glycol 3350 for the treatment of chronic constipation in children. *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine* 2003; 157: 661-664.
7. MOVICOL<sup>®</sup> Paediatric Plain Summary of Product Characteristics. Electronic Medicines Compendium. Last accessed 26 May 2010.