**Statement on Metformin**

***From a spokeswoman for the TGA:***

The TGA is in contact with sponsors of metformin products to clarify the reported shortage issue.

The TGA has been advised by Alphapharm that the 1000mg extended release Diabex XR and Diaformin XR have had batch releases in April and there should therefore not be a shortage of either.  In some cases, it does take time for products to make their way through the supply chain and this may be creating the perception of a shortage.

Alpharpharm has advised that they anticipate the 500mg extended release of Diabex XR and Diaformin XR will be back on the market by 31 May 2016

The TGA has requested sponsors to submit [Medicine Shortage Information Initiative (MSII)](https://www.tga.gov.au/medicine-shortages-information-initiative) Website: <https://www.tga.gov.au/medicine-shortages-information-initiative> notifications where they have a shortage of metformin products. To date they have not made a MSII notification to the TGA.

**There are a number of alternative extended release products containing metformin hydrochloride that are available as an alternative to Diabex XR and Diaformin XR** including:

197402 APO-METFORMIN XR 500 metformin hydrochloride 500 mg modified release tablet blister pack

197405 CHEMMART METFORMIN XR 500 metformin hydrochloride 500 mg modified release tablet blister pack

TERRY WHITE CHEMISTS METFORMIN XR 500 metformin hydrochloride 500mg modified release tablet

197406 tablet blister pack

218270 APO-Metformin XR 1000 metformin hydrochloride 1000 mg modified release tablet blister pack

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Background:

It is not uncommon for there to be temporary shortages of medicines.

The reasons behind pharmaceutical shortage issues can include disruption to manufacturing processes, unavailability of raw materials, manufacturing difficulties, changes in product formulation or manufacturer, commercial decisions by sponsors, industry consolidation and unexpected increases in demand due to disease outbreak or new clinical practice.

When such shortages are identified, it is usual practice for the TGA to work with the sponsor and other pharmaceutical suppliers to minimise any disruption to the availability of medicines in Australia.

On 26 May 2014, the TGA launched the [Medicine Shortage Information Initiative (MSII)](https://www.tga.gov.au/medicine-shortages-information-initiative) Website: <https://www.tga.gov.au/medicine-shortages-information-initiative> website with a consolidated and regularly updated list of medicine shortages and a communication strategy.

The information on the MSII website is provided to support health professionals and consumers when there is a temporary or permanent disruption to the supply of medicine in Australia. The medicine shortages information on this website is based on information provided voluntarily to the TGA by sponsors.