Importation of PTU™ (Propylthiouracil) 50 mg due to Shortage of Canadian Labelled Propylthiouracil 50 mg Products

2020/07/13

Audience

Healthcare Professionals including endocrinologists, obstetricians and gynaecologists, internal medicine specialists, family physicians, general practitioners and pharmacists.

Key messages

- Propylthiouracil is an antithyroid drug that is critical for the treatment of hyperthyroidism in special populations (e.g. pregnant women during the first trimester where clinically appropriate, patients for whom treatment with Tapazole (methimazole) is contraindicated).
- There is currently a shortage of propylthiouracil in the Canadian market.
- Given the medical necessity of this product for patients in Canada, Health Canada has added Phebra's Australian product, PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets, to the List of Drugs for Exceptional Importation and Sale (COVID-19 Program).
- The Australian product is labelled in English only but both the English and French versions of the label will be available on Phebra's website. Additionally, the Product Information and Consumer Medicine Information for PTU™ will also be available online (see below).
- It is recommended that Healthcare Professionals follow the Dosage and Administration instructions included in the Canadian propylthiouracil product's product labelling. The labeling information for PTU™ differs from that for the Canadian propylthiouracil product, particularly in regard to the recommended dosages for adults, children and patients with renal failure, as well as in regards to the Warnings and Precautions, and Overdosage sections.
- It is also recommended that healthcare professionals refer to the Canadian labelling for information on precautions and use of propylthiouracil during pregnancy.

Issue

There is currently a shortage of propylthiouracil in the Canadian market. Given the medical necessity of this product for patients in Canada, Health Canada has added PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets to the List of Drugs for Exceptional Importation and Sale, as an interim measure to help mitigate the shortage.

Products concerned

PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets manufactured by Phebra Pty Ltd, Australia.

Background information

In Canada, propylthiouracil is indicated:

1. For the medical management of hyperthyroidism.
2. In conjunction with radioiodine to hasten recovery while awaiting the effects of radiation.
3. For control of thyrotoxicosis prior to surgery.
4. In the management of a thyroid storm in addition to other therapeutic measures.

The temporary importation of PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets will help to mitigate the current market shortage.

PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets contain the same amount of active ingredient compared to the propylthiouracil 50 mg tablets that were authorized by Health Canada and marketed in Canada.

Information for healthcare professionals

Healthcare professionals are advised of the following:

- The key formulation and labelling characteristics of PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets are indicated in the table below.

Product Name	PTU™ 50 mg tablets
Active Substance	Propylthiouracil
Concentration	**50 mg per tablet**
Other ingredients :	Contains lactose. Gluten free.
Fill Volume	100 tablets / bottle
Format	Bottle
Manufacturer	Phebra Pty Ltd, Australia

- PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets contain the same amount of active ingredient compared to the propylthiouracil 50 mg tablets that were authorized and marketed in Canada.
- Institutions, wholesalers and hospital/retail pharmacists should note that the bar code on the label is likely not recognized by Canadian software systems as this product is Australian labelled.
- PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets contain lactose and is gluten free. It comes in a bottle which contains 100 tablets. Each tablet contains 50 mg of propylthiouracil.
- The recommended dosage in adults and children as indicated in the Product Information for PTU™ exceed those that are recommended for adult and pediatric patients in the Canadian product labeling. Further, labeling of PTU™ does not include recommended dosage for patients with renal failure, which is included in labeling of the Canadian product. Healthcare professionals should follow the Canadian dosage recommendations. A table is provided below for reference, and the Product Monograph for the Canadian propylthiouracil can be found at https://pdf.hres.ca/dpd_pm/00055894.PDF

Patient group		Canadian Propylthiouracil Dosage Recommendations
Adult	**Initial dose**	50-100 mg every 8 hours, with increases as necessary up to a maximum of 500 mg/day. In some cases, initial doses as high as 900 mg/day may be required. When doses larger than 300 mg/day of propylthiouracil are needed, the drug should be administered every 4 to 6 hours.
	Maintenance Dose	50 mg two or three times daily
Pediatric	**Initial dose**	150 mg/m^2/24 h Children 10 years of age and older: 150-300 mg/day in divided doses, at regular intervals. Children 6-10 years of age: 50-150 mg/day in divided doses, at regular intervals.
	Maintenance Dose	50 mg two times daily when euthyroid
Patients with renal failure	**Glomerular filtration rate 10-50 mL/min**	At reduced dose of 25% of the usual maintenance dose
	Glomerular filtration rate <10 mL/min	At reduced dose of 50% of the usual maintenance dose

Important additional safety information that is present in the Canadian propylthiouracil Product Monograph but absent from Phebra's PTU™ Product Information is indicated in the following table:

Warnings	Discontinue propylthiouracil when signs and symptoms of hepatic injury are present. Further thionamide therapy is contraindicated as death has resulted upon rechallenge.
Precautions	Inform patients to promptly report symptoms that may be associated with vasculitis including new rash, hematuria or decreased urine output, dyspnea or hemoptysis.
Symptoms and Treatment of Overdosage	**Symptoms:** Overdosage can result in enlargement of the thyroid gland, with signs and symptoms of hypothyroidism. This can be readily reversed by reducing or even temporarily withdrawing medication. Thyroxine replacement therapy, until the patient becomes euthyroid, may be indicated.
	Treatment: Overdosage in pregnant women may result in congenital goiter and hypothyroidism in the fetus. The newborn child should be examined carefully for signs of hypothyroidism and immediate thyroid therapy should be instituted if hypothyroidism is confirmed.
	Haemorrhage may be controlled by the administration of vitamin K1 and the dosage of propylthiouracil should be reduced.

Information for physicians, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals about PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets is available in English at https://www.phebra.com/product/ptu-50-mg-tablets-propylthiouracil/ and in French at https://www.phebra.com/product/comprimes-de-ptu-50-mg/ .

Information for patients about PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets is available under ''Consumer Medicine Information'' in English at https://www.phebra.com/product/ptu-50-mg-tablets-propylthiouracil/ and in French under ''Informations au patient'' at https://www.phebra.com/product/comprimes-de-ptu-50-mg/

Report health or safety concerns

Any adverse reaction in patients receiving PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets should be reported to Phebra Canada Inc. or Health Canada.

Phebra Canada Inc.

Pharmacovigilance, Adverse Event Reporting and Questions related to the product

Phone: 1-866-333-5458

Fax: 1-514-667-5262
Email: pharmacovigilance@phebracanada.ca

You can report any suspected adverse reactions associated with the use of health products to Health Canada by:

- Calling toll-free at 1-866-234-2345; or
- Visiting MedEffect Canada's Web page on (https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/medeffect-canada/adverse-reaction-reporting.html) for information on how to report online, by mail or by fax.

Anthony Romagnino, CEO
Phebra Canada Inc.

Images

PTU™ (propylthiouracil) 50 mg tablets – Australia (English label only)

Bottle