

# NEW ZEALAND DATA SHEET

## 1 PRODUCT NAME (strength pharmaceutical form)

ENTOCORT 3 mg modified release capsules

## 2 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE COMPOSITION

Each capsule contains 3 mg budesonide.

Excipients with known effect: sugars (sucrose).

For the full list of excipients, see section 6.1.

## 3 PHARMACEUTICAL FORM

ENTOCORT 3 mg modified release capsules are two-piece hard gelatin capsule, size 1 with an opaque light grey body and an opaque pink cap. The cap has black print CIR 3mg.

## 4 CLINICAL PARTICULARS

### 4.1 THERAPEUTIC INDICATIONS

ENTOCORT capsules are indicated for the induction of remission in patients with mild to moderate Crohn's disease affecting the ileum and/or the ascending colon.

### 4.2 DOSAGE AND METHOD OF ADMINISTRATION

#### **Dose**

#### *Adults*

The recommended daily dose for induction of remission is 9 mg, administered once daily for up to eight weeks. The dose should be taken in the morning before breakfast. Full effect is usually achieved within 2-4 weeks. When treatment with ENTOCORT capsules is to be discontinued, the dose should be tapered for 2 to 4 weeks and not stopped abruptly.

#### *Children*

There are limited data on the use of ENTOCORT capsules in children. The available data are insufficient to support safety and efficacy in the paediatric population, therefore such use cannot be recommended until further data become available.

*Influence on Growth* It is recommended that the height of children receiving prolonged treatment with corticosteroids is regularly monitored. If growth is slowed, therapy should be re-evaluated. The benefits of corticosteroid therapy and the possible risk of growth suppression must be carefully weighed. Long-term studies have not been performed in children treated with ENTOCORT capsules.

#### *Elderly*

No special dose adjustment is recommended. However, experience with ENTOCORT capsules in the elderly is limited.

## **Method of administration**

The capsules should be swallowed whole with water. For patients with difficulty swallowing, the capsules may be opened and the contents swallowed after mixing with a tablespoon of apple sauce. It is important that the contents of the capsules are not crushed or chewed.

### **4.3 CONTRAINDICATIONS**

Hypersensitivity to budesonide or to any of the excipients listed in section 6.1.

### **4.4 SPECIAL WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS FOR USE**

#### **Identified precautions**

Use with caution in patients with infections, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, osteoporosis, peptic ulcer, glaucoma or cataracts, or with a family history of diabetes or glaucoma, or with any other condition where glucocorticosteroids may have unwanted effects.

#### ***Transferring from systemic glucocorticosteroids***

When patients are transferred from systemic glucocorticosteroid treatment with a higher systemic effect compared to ENTOCORT capsules, they may have adrenocortical suppression. Therefore, monitoring of adrenocortical function may be considered in these patients and their dose of systemic steroid should be reduced cautiously.

Replacement of high systemic effect glucocorticosteroid treatment with ENTOCORT capsules sometimes unmasks allergies, e.g. rhinitis and eczema, which were previously controlled by the systemic medication.

#### ***Viral infections***

Chicken pox and measles can have a more serious course in patients on oral glucocorticosteroids. In patients who have not had these diseases, particular care should be taken to avoid exposure. If exposed, therapy with varicella zoster immune globulin (VZIG) or pooled intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIG), as appropriate, may be indicated. If chicken pox develops, treatment with antiviral agents may be considered.

#### ***HPA axis suppression and adrenal insufficiency***

Glucocorticosteroids can reduce the response of the hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis to stress. In situations where patients are subject to surgery or other stress situations, supplementation with a systemic glucocorticosteroid is recommended.

#### ***Discontinuation***

When treatment is to be discontinued, the dose should normally be reduced for the last 2 to 4 weeks of therapy. Some patients feel unwell in a non-specific way during the withdrawal phase e.g. pain in muscles and joints. A general insufficient glucocorticosteroid effect should be suspected if, in rare cases, symptoms such as tiredness, headache, nausea and vomiting should occur. In these cases, a temporary increase in the dose of systemic glucocorticosteroids is sometimes necessary.

### ***CYP3A interactions***

*In vivo* studies have shown that oral administration of ketoconazole or itraconazole (known inhibitors of CYP3A4 activity in the liver and in the intestinal mucosa, also see section 4.5) may cause a several-fold increase of the systemic exposure to budesonide and consequently lead to systemic adverse reactions, such as Cushing's Syndrome. If treatment with ketoconazole or itraconazole together with budesonide is indicated, reduction of the budesonide dose should be considered if side effects typical of systemic glucocorticosteroids occur.

Co-treatment with CYP3A inhibitors, including cobicistat-containing products, is expected to increase the risk of systemic side-effects. The combination should be avoided unless the benefit outweighs the increased risk of systemic corticosteroid side-effects, in which case patients should be monitored for systemic corticosteroid side-effects.

After extensive intake of grapefruit juice (which inhibits CYP3A4 activity predominantly in the intestinal mucosa), the systemic exposure for oral budesonide increased about two times. As with other drugs primarily being metabolized through CYP3A4, regular ingestion of grapefruit or grapefruit juice, should be avoided in connection with ENTOCORT capsules administration (other juices such as orange juice or apple juice do not inhibit CYP3A4). Also see section 4.5.

### ***Chronic use***

When ENTOCORT capsules are used chronically in excessive doses, systemic glucocorticosteroid effects such as hypercorticism and adrenal suppression may appear.

Some patients have been treated continuously for up to a year or more with ENTOCORT and although corticosteroid side effects are expected to be less than with prednisolone, caution should be exercised.

### ***Visual disturbance***

Visual disturbance may be reported with systemic and topical corticosteroid use. If a patient presents with symptoms such as blurred vision or other visual disturbances, the patient should be considered for referral to an ophthalmologist for evaluation of possible causes which may include cataract, glaucoma or rare diseases such as central serous chorioretinopathy (CSCR) which have been reported after use of systemic and topical corticosteroids.

### ***Excipients***

Patients with rare hereditary problems of fructose intolerance, glucose-galactose malabsorption or sucrase-isomaltase insufficiency should not take this medicine.

This medicine contains less than 1 mmol sodium (23 mg) per dosage unit. It is essentially sodium-free.

### **Use in hepatic impairment**

Reduced liver function may affect the elimination of glucocorticosteroids. The intravenous pharmacokinetics of budesonide however was similar in cirrhotic patients and in healthy subjects. The pharmacokinetics after oral ingestion of budesonide was affected by compromised liver function as evidenced by increased systemic availability.

## **4.5 INTERACTION WITH OTHER MEDICINES AND OTHER FORMS OF INTERACTION**

Elevated plasma levels and enhanced effects of corticosteroids have been reported in women also receiving oestrogens or oral contraceptives. However, a low-dose combination oral contraceptive that more than doubled the plasma concentration of oral prednisolone, had no significant effect on the plasma concentration of oral budesonide.

At recommended doses, cimetidine has slight but clinically insignificant effect and omeprazole no effect on the pharmacokinetics of oral budesonide.

The metabolism of budesonide is primarily mediated by CYP3A4, a subfamily of cytochrome P450. Inhibition by budesonide on other drugs metabolism via CYP3A4 is unlikely, since budesonide has low affinity to the enzyme. Inhibition of CYP3A4 by e.g. ketoconazole, itraconazole and grapefruit juice can however increase the systemic exposure to budesonide (see section 4.4).

Because adrenal function may be suppressed, an ACTH stimulation test for diagnosing pituitary insufficiency might show false results (low values).

## **4.6 FERTILITY, PREGNANCY AND LACTATION**

### **Pregnancy**

In pregnant animals, administration of budesonide, like other glucocorticosteroids, is associated with abnormalities of foetal development. The relevance of this finding to humans has not been established.

However, as with other agents, the administration of ENTOCORT capsules during pregnancy requires that the benefits for the mother are weighed against the risks for the foetus.

### **Breast-feeding**

Budesonide is excreted in breast milk. Due to the low systemic bioavailability of oral budesonide (see section 5.2), the amount of drug present in the breast milk is likely to be low, depending on the dose given. However, there are no study data on the use of oral budesonide by nursing mothers or their infants. Therefore, a decision should be made whether to discontinue breastfeeding or to discontinue ENTOCORT, taking into account the clinical importance of ENTOCORT to the mothers and the given dose.

### **Fertility**

No data available.

## **4.7 EFFECTS ON ABILITY TO DRIVE AND USE MACHINES**

ENTOCORT has no or negligible influence on the ability to drive and use machines.

## **4.8 UNDESIRABLE EFFECTS**

In clinical studies most adverse events were of mild to moderate intensity and of a non-serious character.

## Tabulated list of adverse reactions

The following suspected adverse reactions is based on clinical trials and/or spontaneous post-marketing reports.

The following definitions apply to the incidence of undesirable effects: very common ( $\geq 1/10$ ); common ( $\geq 1/100$  to  $< 1/10$ ); uncommon ( $\geq 1/1,000$  to  $< 1/100$ ); rare ( $\geq 1/10,000$  to  $< 1/1,000$ ); very rare ( $< 1/10,000$ ); not known (cannot estimate from the available data).

**Table 1 Adverse drug reactions by frequency and system organ class (SOC)**

SOC	Frequency	Reaction
Immune system disorders	Very rare	Anaphylactic reaction
	Not known	Hypersensitivity reactions such as angioedema
Endocrine disorders	Common	Cushingoid features
Metabolism and nutrition disorders	Common	Hypokalemia
Psychiatric disorders	Common	Behavioural changes such as nervousness, insomnia, mood swings and depression
	Uncommon	Anxiety
	Rare	Aggression
Nervous system disorders	Uncommon	Tremor, psychomotor hyperactivity
Eye disorders	Rare	Cataract including subcapsular cataract, blurred vision (see also section 4.4)
Cardiac disorders	Common	Palpitations
Gastrointestinal disorders	Common	Dyspepsia
Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders	Common	Skin reactions (urticaria, exanthema)
	Rare	Ecchymosis
Musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders	Common	Muscle cramps
	Very rare	Growth retardation
Reproductive system and breast disorders	Common	Menstrual disorders

Most of the adverse events listed can also be expected for other treatments with glucocorticoids.

### Description of selected adverse reactions

Side effects typical of systemic glucocorticosteroids (e.g. Cushingoid features and growth retardation) may occur. These side effects are dependent on dose, treatment time, concomitant and previous glucocorticosteroid intake and individual sensitivity.

Clinical studies have shown that the frequency of glucocorticosteroid associated side-effects is substantially reduced (approximately halved) with ENTOCORT capsules compared with prednisolone at therapeutically equivalent doses.

### Reporting of suspected adverse reactions

Reporting suspected adverse reactions after authorisation of the medicine is important. It allows continued monitoring of the benefit/risk balance of the medicine. Healthcare professionals are asked to report any suspected adverse reactions <https://nzphvc.otago.ac.nz/reporting/>.

## 4.9 OVERDOSE

Reports of acute toxicity and/or death following overdosage of glucocorticosteroids are rare. Thus, acute overdosage with ENTOCORT capsules, even in excessive doses, is not expected to be a clinical problem. In the event of acute overdosage, no specific antidote is available. Treatment consists of immediate gastric lavage or emesis followed by supportive and symptomatic therapy.

For advice on the management of overdose please contact the National Poisons Centre on 0800 POISON (0800 764766).

## 5 PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES

Pharmacotherapeutic group: glucocorticosteroids, ATC Code: A07EA06

### 5.1 PHARMACODYNAMIC PROPERTIES

Budesonide is a glucocorticosteroid with high local anti-inflammatory effect. ENTOCORT capsules consist of gelatin capsules filled with gastro-resistant, prolonged release granules for oral use. The granules are practically insoluble in gastric juice, and have prolonged release properties adjusted to release budesonide in the small intestine through the colon.

#### Topical anti-inflammatory effect

The exact mechanism of action of glucocorticosteroids in the treatment of Crohn's disease is not fully understood. Anti-inflammatory actions, such as inhibition of inflammatory mediator release and inhibition of cytokine mediated immune responses, are probably important.

Data from clinical pharmacology studies and controlled clinical trials indicate that ENTOCORT capsules act topically. This is supported by a similar efficacy, but significantly less impact on the HPA-axis and systemic inflammatory markers, compared with prednisolone.

#### HPA axis function

At recommended doses, ENTOCORT capsules cause significantly less effect than prednisolone 20-40 mg daily on morning plasma cortisol, on 24-hour plasma cortisol (AUC 0-24 h) and on 24-hour urine cortisol. Also, ACTH tests have shown that ENTOCORT capsules, compared with prednisolone, have significantly less impact on the adrenal function.

#### Bone mineral density and growth

In a study investigating bone mineral density during treatment with ENTOCORT capsules or prednisolone for up to two years, treatment with ENTOCORT capsules resulted in significantly less bone loss than prednisolone treatment in steroid naïve patients.

### 5.2 PHARMACOKINETIC PROPERTIES

#### Absorption

After oral dosing of plain micronised budesonide, absorption is rapid and seems to be complete. After dosing of ENTOCORT capsules a major fraction of absorbed medicine is absorbed in the ileum and ascending colon. In patients with active Crohn's disease, the systemic availability after a single dose ranges from 12 to 20%. In healthy subjects the corresponding figures are 9 to 12%.

After repeated dosing for 8 weeks, the systemic availability approaches that in healthy subjects (about 10%).

### **Distribution**

Budesonide has a volume of distribution of approximately 3 L/kg. Plasma protein binding averages 85-90%. Following oral dosing of ENTOCORT capsules 9 mg, mean maximal plasma concentration is approximately 5-10 nmol/L, attained between 3-5 hours.

### **Biotransformation**

Budesonide then undergoes extensive biotransformation ( $\approx 90\%$ ) on first passage through the liver to metabolites of low glucocorticosteroid activity. The glucocorticosteroid activity of the major metabolites, 6 $\beta$ -hydroxybudesonide and 16 $\alpha$ -hydroxyprednisolone, is less than 1% of that of budesonide. The metabolism of budesonide is primarily mediated by CYP3A4, a subfamily of cytochrome 450.

### **Elimination**

Elimination of budesonide given as ENTOCORT capsules is rate limited by its absorption, and the plasma half-life averages 4 hours. The metabolites are excreted as such or in conjugated form, mainly via the kidneys. No intact budesonide has been detected in the urine. Budesonide has a high systemic clearance (approximately 1.2 L/min), and the plasma half-life after IV dosing averages 2-3 hours.

### **Linearity**

The kinetics of budesonide are dose-proportional at clinically relevant doses.

## **5.3 PRECLINICAL SAFETY DATA**

Results from acute, subacute and chronic toxicity studies show that the systemic effects of budesonide, e.g. decreased body-weight gain and atrophy of lymphoid tissues and adrenal cortex, are less severe or similar to those observed after administration of other glucocorticosteroids.

Budesonide evaluated in six different test systems did not show any mutagenic or clastogenic effects.

An increased incidence of brain gliomas in male rats in a carcinogenicity study could not be verified in a repeat study, in which the incidence of gliomas did not differ between any of the groups with active treatment (budesonide, prednisolone, triamcinolone acetonide) and the control groups.

Liver changes (primary hepatocellular neoplasms) found in male rats in the original carcinogenicity study were noted again in a repeat study with budesonide as well as with the reference glucocorticosteroids. These effects are most probably related to a receptor effect and thus represent a class-effect.

Available clinical experience shows that there are no indications that budesonide or other glucocorticosteroids induce brain gliomas or primary hepatocellular neoplasms in man.

The toxicity of ENTOCORT capsules, with focus on the gastrointestinal tract, has been studied in cynomolgus monkeys in doses up to 5 mg/kg (approximately 25 times the recommended

daily dose in man) after repeated oral administration for up to 6 months. No effects were observed in the gastrointestinal tract, neither at gross pathology nor in the histopathological examination.

## **6 PHARMACEUTICAL PARTICULARS**

### **6.1 LIST OF EXCIPIENTS**

Capsule filling:

- Ethylcellulose
- Tributyl acetylcitrate
- Methacrylic acid copolymer
- Triethyl citrate (E1505)
- Dimeticone 1000
- Polysorbate 80 (E433)
- Purified talc (E553b)
- Sugar spheres (consisting of sucrose and maize starch).

Capsule shell:

- Gelatin
- Titanium dioxide (E171)
- Iron oxide (E172)
- Colloidal anhydrous silica
- Liquid paraffin
- Sodium lauryl sulfate.

Capsules are printed with black ink containing ammonium hydroxide, black iron oxide, potassium hydroxide and shellac.

### **6.2 INCOMPATIBILITIES**

No known incompatibilities.

### **6.3 SHELF-LIFE**

36 months

### **6.4 SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS FOR STORAGE**

The capsules should be stored below 30°C in the container. Replace the cap firmly after use. Store out of reach of children.

### **6.5 NATURE AND CONTENTS OF CONTAINER**

The capsules are packed in HDPE containers of 90 or 100 capsules. The containers are provided with a polypropylene screw cap including a desiccant.

Not all pack sizes may be marketed.

## 6.6 SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS FOR DISPOSAL

No special requirements.

## 7 MEDICINE SCHEDULE

Prescription Medicine

## 8 SPONSOR

Chiesi New Zealand Ltd  
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## 9 DATE OF FIRST APPROVAL

25 September 1997

## 10 DATE OF REVISION OF THE TEXT

04 November 2022

### Summary table of changes

Section changed	Summary of new information
3	Revision of appearance
4.4	Addition of excipient warnings
4.6	Addition of information for use during breast-feeding
4.7	Revision of information
4.8	Addition of hypersensitivity reactions such as angioedema. Reformat of adverse drug reactions by frequency and system organ class (SOC).
6.1	Update to excipient names
8	Updated contact information
All	Minor editorial and formatting changes