



## Pediatric Antibiotic Suspensions

**The Issue:** Several pediatric oral antibiotic suspensions remain on shortage in Canada, but NH supply has improved with intermittent stock available for pharmacies to order. NH pharmacy continues to monitor supply closely due to continued instability in the supply chain.

**Stock Status:**

Drug (suspension)	NH Stock Status	Estimated Resupply Date
amoxicillin	8+ weeks on hand	now available in limited order quantities
cefuroxime	8+ weeks on hand	on backorder until May/June 2023
azithromycin	5+ weeks on hand	now available in limited order quantities

**Practice Implications:**

- Clinicians should be aware of these ongoing shortages and potential formulary alternatives.
- **Reminder:** before selecting an alternate option, consider the likelihood of viral infection.
  - **Viral infections are currently on the rise and do not warrant antibiotic therapy.**
- Information on appropriate alternative treatment options for specific indications are available from BC Children’s Hospital ([Firstline app](#)) and also from [Bugs&Drugs](#) online.
  - Due to increased demand, alternatives may also be in short supply.
  - Pharmacists will discuss available alternatives with clinicians at their sites as required.

**Potential Formulary Alternatives\*:**

- Amoxicillin capsules (250 mg or 500 mg) may be opened and added to a cold drink or small amount of soft food *if appropriate weight-based dosing can be obtained.*

Indication	Therapeutic Alternative(s)
acute otitis media, bacterial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ amoxicillin-clavulanate <b>or</b></li> <li>➤ clarithromycin</li> </ul>
community-acquired pneumonia (greater than 3 months old – mild to moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ amoxicillin-clavulanate</li> </ul>
pharyngitis/tonsillitis, streptococcal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ penicillin V (no oral suspension available; crushed tablets only) <b>or</b></li> <li>➤ clindamycin</li> </ul>

<b>March 3, 2023</b> For the information of physicians, nurses, and pharmacists. <b>PLEASE POST</b>	<b>Drug Shortage Update</b>	✓	<b>For further information contact:</b>  Medication Use Management Pharmacists:  <a href="mailto:mumpharmacist@northernhealth.ca" style="color: white;">mumpharmacist@northernhealth.ca</a>
	Drug Discontinuation		
	Medication Change		
	Best Practice		

\*Alternatives are provided for clinician information and may not be appropriate for all clinical situations. The information provided does not replace clinical judgment.