

Summary of Product Characteristics

1 NAME OF THE MEDICINAL PRODUCT

Zirtek 10 mg/ml Oral Drops, Solution

2 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE COMPOSITION

Each ml of oral drops, solution contains 10 mg cetirizine dihydrochloride, one drop of solution contains 0.5 mg cetirizine dihydrochloride

Excipients with known effect:

- one ml of solution contains 1.35 mg methylparahydroxybenzoate (E 218)
- one ml of solution contains 0.15 mg propylparahydroxybenzoate (E 216)
- one ml of solution contains 350 mg propylene glycol (E 1520)

For the full list of excipients, see section 6.1

3 PHARMACEUTICAL FORM

Oral drops, solution

Clear and colorless liquid with slightly sweet taste and a bitter flavour.

4 CLINICAL PARTICULARS

4.1 Therapeutic indications

Cetirizine dihydrochloride 10 mg/ml oral drops, solution is indicated in adults and paediatric patients 2 years and above:

- for the relief of nasal and ocular symptoms of seasonal and perennial allergic rhinitis.
- for the relief of symptoms of chronic idiopathic urticaria.

4.2 Posology and method of administration

Posology

10 mg once daily (20 drops).

Special population

Elderly

Data do not suggest that the dose needs to be reduced in elderly subjects provided that the renal function is normal.

Renal impairment

There are no data to document the efficacy/safety ratio in patients with renal impairment. Since cetirizine is mainly eliminated via renal route (see section 5.2.), in cases no alternative treatment can be used, the dosing intervals must be individualized according to renal function. Refer to the following table and adjust the dose as indicated.

Dosing adjustments for adult patients with impaired renal function

Group	Estimated Glomerular Filtration Rate (eGFR) (ml/min)	Dosage and frequency
Normal renal function	>90	10 mg once daily
Mildly decreased renal function	60 - <90	10 mg once daily
Moderately decreased renal function	30 - < 60	5 mg once daily
Severely decreased renal function	15 - <30 not requiring dialysis	5 mg once every 2 days
End-stage renal disease	<15 requiring dialysis treatment	Contra-indicated

Hepatic impairment

No dose adjustment is needed in patients with solely hepatic impairment. In patients with hepatic impairment and renal impairment, adjustment of the dose is recommended (see Renal impairment above).

Paediatric population

Children aged 2 to 6 years: 2.5 mg twice daily (5 drops twice daily)

Children aged 6 to 12 years: 5 mg twice daily (10 drops twice daily).

Adolescents 12 years and above: 10 mg daily (20 drops).

In paediatric patients suffering from renal impairment, the dose will have to be adjusted on an individual basis taking into account the renal clearance, age and the body weight of the patient.

Method of administration

The drops should be poured in a spoon or diluted in water, and taken orally.

If dilution is used, it should be considered, especially for administration to children, that the volume of water to which the drops are added, needs to be adapted according to the quantity of water the patient is able to swallow. The diluted solution should be taken immediately.

4.3 Contraindications

Hypersensitivity to the active substance, to any of the excipients listed in section 6.1, to hydroxyzine or to any piperazine derivatives.

Patients with end-stage renal disease with an eGFR (estimated Glomerular Filtration Rate) below 15 ml/min.

4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use

At therapeutic doses, no clinically significant interactions have been demonstrated with alcohol (for a blood alcohol level of 0.5 g/l). Nevertheless, precaution is recommended if alcohol is taken concomitantly.

Caution should be taken in patients with predisposition factors of urinary retention (e.g. spinal cord lesion, prostatic hyperplasia) as cetirizine may increase the risk of urinary retention.

Caution is recommended in epileptic patients and patients at risk of convulsions.

Response to allergy skin tests are inhibited by antihistamines and a wash-out period (of 3 days) is required before performing them.

Pruritus and/or urticaria may occur when cetirizine is stopped, even if those symptoms were not present before treatment initiation. In some cases, the symptoms may be intense and may require treatment to be restarted. The symptoms should resolve when the treatment is restarted.

Excipients

This medicinal product contains methylparahydroxybenzoate (E 218) and propylparahydroxybenzoate (E 216) which may cause allergic reactions (possibly delayed).

This medicinal product contains 350 mg propylene glycol (E 1520) in each ml.

This medicinal product contains less than 1 mmol sodium (23 mg) per dose, that is to say essentially 'sodium-free'.

Paediatric population

The use of the product is not recommended in infants and toddlers aged less than 2 years.

4.5 Interaction with other medicinal products and other forms of interaction

Due to the pharmacokinetic, pharmacodynamic and tolerance profile of cetirizine, no interactions are expected with this antihistamine. Actually, neither pharmacodynamic nor significant pharmacokinetic interaction was reported in drug-drug interactions studies performed, notably with pseudoephedrine or theophylline (400 mg/day).

The extent of absorption of cetirizine is not reduced with food, although the rate of absorption is decreased.

In sensitive patients, the concurrent use of alcohol or other CNS depressants may cause additional reductions in alertness and impairment of performance, although cetirizine does not potentiate the effect of alcohol (0.5 g/L blood levels).

4.6 Fertility, pregnancy and lactation

Pregnancy

For cetirizine prospectively collected data on pregnancy outcomes do not suggest potential for maternal or foetal/embryonic toxicity above background rates.

Animal studies do not indicate direct or indirect harmful effects with respect to pregnancy, embryonal/fetal development, parturition or postnatal development. Caution should be exercised when prescribing to pregnant women.

Breast-feeding

Cetirizine passes into breast milk. A risk of side effects in breastfed infants cannot be excluded.

Cetirizine is excreted in human milk at concentrations representing 25% to 90% of those measured in plasma, depending on sampling time after administration. Therefore, caution should be exercised when prescribing cetirizine to lactating women.

Fertility

Limited data is available on human fertility but no safety concern has been identified.

Animal data show no safety concern for human reproduction.

4.7 Effects on ability to drive and use machines

Objective measurements of driving ability, sleep latency and assembly line performance have not demonstrated any clinically relevant effects at the recommended dose of 10 mg. However, patients who experience somnolence should refrain from driving, engaging in potentially hazardous activities or operating machinery. They should not exceed the recommended dose and should take their response to the medicinal product into account.

4.8 Undesirable effects

Clinical studies

- *Overview*

Clinical studies have shown that cetirizine at the recommended dosage has minor undesirable effects on the CNS, including somnolence, fatigue, dizziness and headache. In some cases, paradoxical CNS stimulation has been reported.

Although cetirizine is a selective antagonist of peripheral H₁-receptors and is relatively free of anticholinergic activity, isolated cases of micturition difficulty, eye accommodation disorders and dry mouth have been reported.

Instances of abnormal hepatic function with elevated hepatic enzymes accompanied by elevated bilirubin have been reported. Mostly this resolves upon discontinuation of the treatment with cetirizine dihydrochloride.

- *Listing of ADRs*

Double blind controlled clinical trials comparing cetirizine to placebo or other antihistamines at the recommended dosage (10 mg daily for cetirizine), of which quantified safety data are available, included more than 3200 subjects exposed to cetirizine.

From this pooling, the following adverse reactions were reported for cetirizine 10 mg in the placebo-controlled trials at rates of 1.0 % or greater:

Adverse reactions (WHO-ART)	Cetirizine 10 mg (n= 3260)	Placebo (n = 3061)
General disorders and administration site conditions		
Fatigue	1.63 %	0.95 %
Nervous system disorders		

Dizziness	1.10 %	0.98 %
Headache	7.42 %	8.07 %
Gastro-intestinal disorders		
Abdominal pain	0.98 %	1.08 %
Dry mouth	2.09 %	0.82 %
Nausea	1.07 %	1.14 %
Psychiatric disorders		
Somnolence	9.63 %	5.00 %
Respiratory, thoracic and mediastinal disorders		
Pharyngitis	1.29 %	1.34 %

Although statistically more common than under placebo, somnolence was mild to moderate in the majority of cases. Objective tests as demonstrated by other studies have demonstrated that usual daily activities are unaffected at the recommended daily dose in healthy young volunteers.

Paediatric population

Adverse reactions at rates of 1 % or greater in children aged from 6 months to 12 years, included in placebo-controlled clinical trials are:

Adverse reactions (WHO-ART)	Cetirizine (n=1656)	Placebo (n =1294)
Gastro-intestinal disorders		
Diarrhoea	1.0 %	0.6 %
Psychiatric disorders		
Somnolence	1.8 %	1.4 %
Respiratory, thoracic and mediastinal disorders		
Rhinitis	1.4 %	1.1 %
General disorders <i>and administration site conditions</i>		
Fatigue	1.0 %	0.3 %

Post-marketing experience

In addition to the adverse reactions reported during clinical studies and listed above, the following undesirable effects have been reported in post-marketing experience.

Undesirable effects are described according to MedDRA System Organ Class and by estimated frequency based on post-marketing experience.

Frequencies are defined as follows: 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 be estimated from the available data)

Blood and lymphatic disorders

Very rare: thrombocytopenia

Immune system disorders

Rare: hypersensitivity

Very rare: anaphylactic shock

Metabolism and nutrition disorders

Not known: increased appetite

Psychiatric disorders

Uncommon: agitation

Rare: aggression, confusion, depression, hallucination, insomnia

Very rare: tics

Not known: suicidal ideation, nightmare

Nervous system disorders

Uncommon: paraesthesia
Rare: convulsions
Very rare: dysgeusia, syncope, tremor, dystonia, dyskinesia
Not known: amnesia, memory impairment

Eye disorders

Very rare: accommodation disorder, blurred vision, oculogyric crisis

Ear and labyrinth disorders

Not known: vertigo

Cardiac disorders

Rare: tachycardia

Gastro-intestinal disorders

Uncommon: diarrhoea

Hepatobiliary disorders

Rare: hepatic function abnormal (increased transaminases, alkaline phosphatase, γ -GT and bilirubin)
Not known: hepatitis

Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders

Uncommon: pruritus, rash
Rare: urticaria
Very rare: angioneurotic oedema, fixed drug eruption
Not known: acute generalized exanthematous pustulosis

Musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders

Not known: arthralgia, myalgia

Renal and urinary disorders

Very rare: dysuria, enuresis
Not known: urinary retention

General disorders and administration site conditions

Uncommon: asthenia, malaise
Rare: oedema

Investigations

Rare: weight increased

Description of selected adverse reactions

After discontinuation of cetirizine, pruritus (intense itching) and/or urticaria have been reported.

Reporting of suspected adverse reactions

Reporting suspected adverse reactions after authorisation of the medicinal product is important. It allows continued monitoring of the benefit/risk balance of the medicinal product. Healthcare professionals are asked to report any suspected adverse reactions via:HPRA Pharmacovigilance

Website: www.hpra.ie

4.9 Overdose

Symptoms

Symptoms observed after an overdose of cetirizine are mainly associated with CNS effects or with effects that could suggest an anticholinergic effect.

Adverse events reported after an intake of at least 5 times the recommended daily dose are: confusion, diarrhoea, dizziness, fatigue, headache, malaise, mydriasis, pruritus, restlessness, sedation, somnolence, stupor, tachycardia, tremor, and urinary retention.

Management

There is no known specific antidote to cetirizine.

Should overdose occur, symptomatic or supportive treatment is recommended. Gastric lavage may be considered shortly after ingestion of the drug.

Cetirizine is not effectively removed by haemodialysis.

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5 PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES

5.1 Pharmacodynamic properties

Pharmacotherapeutic group: Antihistamine for systemic use, piperazine derivatives, ATC code: R06A E07

Mechanism of action

Cetirizine, a human metabolite of hydroxyzine, is a potent and selective antagonist of peripheral H₁-receptors. *In vitro* receptor binding studies have shown no measurable affinity for other than H₁-receptors.

Pharmacodynamic effects

In addition to its anti-H₁ effect, cetirizine was shown to display anti-allergic activities: at a dose of 10 mg once or twice daily, it inhibits the late phase recruitment of eosinophils, in the skin and conjunctiva of atopic subjects submitted to allergen challenge.

Clinical efficacy and safety

Studies in healthy volunteers show that cetirizine, at doses of 5 and 10 mg strongly inhibits the wheal and flare reactions induced by very high concentrations of histamine into the skin, but the correlation with efficacy is not established.

In a six-week, placebo-controlled study of 186 patients with allergic rhinitis and concomitant mild to moderate asthma, cetirizine 10 mg once daily improved rhinitis symptoms and did not alter pulmonary function. This study supports the safety of administering cetirizine to allergic patients with mild to moderate asthma.

In a placebo-controlled study, cetirizine given at the high daily dose of 60 mg for seven days did not cause statistically significant prolongation of QT interval.

At the recommended dosage, cetirizine has demonstrated that it improves the quality of life of patients with perennial and seasonal allergic rhinitis.

Paediatric population

In a 35-day study in children aged 5 to 12, no tolerance to the antihistaminic effect (suppression of wheal and flare) of cetirizine was found. When a treatment with cetirizine is stopped after repeated administration, the skin recovers its normal reactivity to histamine within 3 days.

5.2 Pharmacokinetic properties

Absorption

The steady - state peak plasma concentrations is approximately 300 ng/ml and is achieved within 1.0 ± 0.5 h. The distribution of pharmacokinetic parameters such as peak plasma concentration (C_{max}) and area under curve (AUC), is unimodal. The extent of absorption of cetirizine is not reduced with food, although the rate of absorption is decreased. The extent of bioavailability is similar when cetirizine is given as solutions, capsules or tablets.

Distribution

The apparent volume of distribution is 0.50 l/kg. Plasma protein binding of cetirizine is 93 ± 0.3 %. Cetirizine does not modify the protein binding of warfarin.

Biotransformation

Cetirizine does not undergo extensive first pass metabolism.

Elimination

The terminal half-life is approximately 10 hours and no accumulation is observed for cetirizine following daily doses of 10 mg for 10 days. About two third of the dose are excreted unchanged in urine.

Linearity/Non-linearity

Cetirizine exhibits linear kinetics over the range of 5 to 60 mg.

Renal impairment: The pharmacokinetics of the drug was similar in patients with mild impairment (creatinine clearance higher than 40 ml/min) and healthy volunteers. Patients with moderate renal impairment had a 3-fold increase in half-life and 70 % decrease in clearance compared to healthy volunteers.

Patients on hemodialysis (creatinine clearance less than 7 ml/min) given a single oral 10 mg dose of cetirizine had a 3-fold increase in half-life and a 70 % decrease in clearance compared to normal.

Cetirizine was poorly cleared by haemodialysis. Dosing adjustment is necessary in patients with moderate or severe renal impairment (see section 4.2).

Hepatic impairment: Patients with chronic liver diseases (hepatocellular, cholestatic, and biliary cirrhosis) given 10 or 20 mg of cetirizine as a single dose had a 50 % increase in half-life along with a 40 % decrease in clearance compared to healthy subjects.

Dosing adjustment is only necessary in patients with hepatic impairment if concomitant renal impairment is present.

Elderly: Following a single 10 mg oral dose, half-life increased by about 50 % and clearance decreased by 40 % in 16 elderly subjects compared to the normal subjects. The decrease in cetirizine clearance in these elderly volunteers appeared to be related to their decreased renal function.

Paediatric population: The half-life of cetirizine was about 6 hours in children of 6-12 years and 5 hours in children 2-6 years. In infants and toddlers aged 6 to 24 months, it is reduced to 3.1 hours.

5.3 Preclinical safety data

Non-clinical data reveal no special hazard for humans based on conventional studies of safety pharmacology, repeated dose toxicity, genotoxicity, carcinogenic potential, toxicity to reproduction and development.

6 PHARMACEUTICAL PARTICULARS

6.1 List of excipients

- Glycerol (E 422)
- Propylene glycol (E 1520)
- Saccharin sodium
- Methylparahydroxybenzoate (E 218)
- Propylparahydroxybenzoate (E 216)

- Sodium acetate
- Glacial acetic acid
- Purified water

6.2 Incompatibilities

Not applicable

6.3 Shelf life

Finished product : 5 years
After first opening : 3 months

6.4 Special precautions for storage

This medicinal product does not require any special storage conditions.

6.5 Nature and contents of container

Amber glass bottle (type III Ph. Eur.) containing volumes of 10, 15, or 20 ml, fitted with a low density polyethylene dropper insert and closed with a white polypropylene "child-proof" cap.

Not all pack sizes may be marketed.

6.6 Special precautions for disposal

No special requirements.
Any unused medicinal product or waste material should be disposed of in accordance with local requirements.

7 MARKETING AUTHORISATION HOLDER

UCB (Pharma) Ireland Limited
United Drug House
Magna Drive, Magna Business Park
Citywest Road
Dublin 24
Ireland

8 MARKETING AUTHORISATION NUMBER

PA0891/008/004

9 DATE OF FIRST AUTHORISATION/RENEWAL OF THE AUTHORISATION

Date of first authorisation: 28th August 2009
Date of last renewal: 14th November 2011

10 DATE OF REVISION OF THE TEXT

October 2023