



Creon®, Nutrizum and Pancrex® Shortages

Information for Patients

There is a national shortage of some forms of Creon®, Nutrizum® and Pancrex®. These medicines are used as pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy also known as PERT.

What is pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy (PERT)?

The pancreas normally makes enzymes that help to digest your food and milky drinks. There are a number of conditions that can affect the ability of the pancreas's to produce these enzymes including pancreatitis, cystic fibrosis and pancreatic cancer. Some patients may take PERT for other conditions.

If the pancreas cannot produce the enzymes, you need to digest your food you may not get all the nutrients you need which in turn may lead to symptoms. PERT helps to manage this by replacing the enzymes the pancreas would normally make.

Which brands are affected.

There are limited supplies of the following PERT:-

- Creon® 10,000 and 25,000 gastro-resistant capsules.
- Nutrizum® 22 capsules
- Pancrex V® capsules and powder

Why are there shortages of PERT?

The companies that make PERT continue to report shortages of these brands. The shortages may affect different types of PERT at different times.

The supply disruption of Creon® capsules is due to limited availability of the ingredients and difficulties with manufacturing sufficient products to meet demand.

The supply disruption for Nutrizum® 22 capsules has been caused by a manufacturing issue and increased demand because of the Creon® supply issue.

Supply disruptions to Pancrex are due to increased demand because of the Creon® and Nutrizum® issues.

Supplies of PERT are being regularly restocked but supply continues to be an issue so stock comes in and goes out regularly. It will take some time for stocks to get back to normal in all areas.

What should I do if my pharmacy is struggling to get my PERT?

It is a good idea to put in your prescription requests **2 weeks earlier** than usual to give the pharmacist time to get your PERT. You may also need to collect your prescriptions more often. Pharmacies are only supplying one month's supply at a time, to try to help supplies last longer.

If your normal pharmacy does not have your PERT please be understanding with the pharmacist and their team. This is a national shortage, and they will be doing all they can to source your medication.

Check back in a couple of days as we understand pharmacies are restocking with fresh supplies regularly.

You could also try calling other pharmacies in the area to see if they have supplies. Make sure you try several different chains of pharmacy. One chain might be out of stock, but others might be able to get it.

Ask your GP practice to give you a separate prescription for PERT, without any other medicines included on it. This will make it easier for you to get PERT at other pharmacies, if your usual one does not have it.

If your pharmacist can not get the usual brands of PERT, they may be able to get other brands from overseas. These include PANCREAZE® and Zenpep®. Your pharmacist will need to liaise with your GP practice to arrange a prescription for this to then order the stock in. Be aware that it may take a bit of time for these to be delivered.

You may see vegetarian enzymes in shops or online, but these are no substitute for PERT. The PERT needed to treat your condition is only available on prescription.

Additional Information

The Pancreatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland has produced a position statement on PERT Shortage which can be accessed at: -

<https://www.psgbi.org/position-statement-pert-shortage/>

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NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board Pharmacy PERT Shortages Group

