

Lincolnshire Prescribing and Clinical Effectiveness Bulletin

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GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF LOWER COST SINGLE USE LANCETS IN DIABETES

Summary

- Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) collectively spend nearly £250,000pa on single use lancets for finger pricking in diabetics undertaking blood glucose monitoring.
- Currently, the most popular brands prescribed are predominantly premium price products such as *Fastclix*, *FreeStyle*, *Microlet* and *Trueplus*.
- There are a number of lower cost brands of lancets that are 'universal fit' for most of the finger pricking devices available. Compatibility information is tabulated below.
- Following review, *Apollo Twist*, *GlucoRx Lancets*, *iCare Advanced*, *Mylife lancets* and *Omnican Lance Soft* are recommended as the lower cost lancets of choice. Costs are between £4.50 and £5.50 per pack of 200, approximately 25 – 50% less than the higher cost market leaders. If these products were prescribed preferentially in Lincolnshire, expenditure on single use lancets would be reduced by £77,000 p.a.
- Prescribers are urged to review their prescribing of single use lancets with a view to transferring patients to lower cost products where appropriate.
- Specialist Diabetes Nurses have stressed to us the significant waste associated with over-ordering or stock-piling of lancets that are ultimately never used. Prescribers are urged to review their prescribing of single use lancets with a view to transferring patients to lower cost products where appropriate. Quantities prescribed and frequency of script collection should also be considered to minimize the risk of over-ordering or stock-piling.
- Prescribers are also urged to be wary of direct patient requests for a particular brand of lancet as these can sometimes be driven by direct marketing to patients linked to the current meter or blood glucose testing strip that the patient is using. In general, direct patient requests for higher cost lancets should be refused unless there is a good clinical reason for a particular brand of lancet to be supplied.
- Safety lancets should usually be reserved solely for use by healthcare workers to reduce the risk of needle stick injury. Exceptionally they should also be available at the request of a Specialist Diabetes Nurse for patients with poor manual dexterity who have been unable to manage conventional lancets or even multi-lancet devices. Examples include: *Apollo Pressure Activated Safety Lancets*, *Medisafe Solo*, *Mylife Safety*, *Sarstedt Safety*, *Sterilance Lit II Safety* and *Unistik 3*
- Multi-lancet devices may be advantageous for patients with restricted manual dexterity or where disposal of sharps may be difficult or impractical. Examples include: *Fastclix* and *Multiclix*.

Introduction

Lancets are used by diabetics to provide a blood sample for testing blood glucose levels. They are produced in different lengths and gauges; the higher the gauge, the smaller the needle diameter, the less painful the finger pricking process. Lower gauge lancets are recommended for patients who produce insufficient blood samples when using higher gauge products. Single use lancets are generally used in combination with a finger pricking device. Finger pricking devices are not prescribable on FP10, but patients will usually receive one with their blood glucose testing meter.

Background

Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) collectively spend nearly £250,000pa on single use lancets. There are 50 different lancets listed in the *Drug Tariff* and between January to March 2015, 36 of these were prescribed somewhere in county. Currently, the top 5 prescribed products by cost across the county are *Fastclix*, *Softclix*, *Multiclix*, *Omnican* and *FreeStyle*, accounting for 60% of the total lancet costs. Apart from *Omnican*, all of these lancets are premium price products costing between £7.33 and £9.64 per pack of 200.

The table below lists all of the lancets currently prescribed across Lincolnshire Safety lancets are highlighted in grey and lower cost options are highlighted in green:

Lancets prescribed in Lincolnshire (Q4 Jan-Mar 15)	Cost/200	Pack Size
<i>AgaMatrix Ultra-Thin</i> Lancets 0.20mm/33 Gauge	£7.17	200
<i>AgaMatrix Ultra-Thin</i> Lancets 0.35mm/28 Gauge	£5.43	200
<i>Apollo Pressure-Activated Safety</i> Lancets 1.8mm/28 Gauge	£11.98 (2 x 100)	100
<i>Apollo Twist</i> Lancets 0.36mm/28 Gauge	£4.50	200
<i>BD Micro-Fine +</i> Lancets 0.20mm/33 Gauge	£6.32 (2 x 100)	100
<i>BD Micro-Fine +</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	£6.13	200
<i>BGStar Ultra-Thin</i> Lancets 0.20mm/33 Gauge	£7.30 (2 x 100)	100
<i>CareSens</i> Lancets 0.36mm/28 Gauge	£5.90 (2 x 100)	100
<i>FastClix</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	£9.83	204
<i>FreeStyle</i> Lancets 0.5mm/28 Gauge	£7.33	200
<i>GlucoRx</i> Lancets 0.31mm/30 Gauge	£5.50	200
<i>Glucoject No-dol</i> Lancets 0.315mm/30 Gauge	£7.19 (200) £7.42 (2 x 100)	100 & 200
<i>Glucoject</i> Lancets PLUS 0.20mm/33 Gauge	£7.22 (200) £7.46 (2 x 100)	100 & 200
<i>Greenlan</i> Lancets 0.35mm/28 Gauge	£6.00 (2 x 100 and 200)	100 & 200
<i>Mendor Discreet</i> Lancets 0.32mm/28 Gauge	£7.22 (2 x 100)	100
<i>Microdot</i> Lancets 0.31mm/30 Gauge	£6.00 (2 x 100 and 200)	100 & 200
<i>Microlet</i> Lancets 0.5mm/28 Gauge	£7.44 (200) £7.80 (2 x 100)	100 & 200
<i>Multiclix</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	£9.83	204
<i>MyLife</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	£5.50	200

<i>MyLife Multicolour</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	£5.50	200
<i>MyLife Safety</i> Lancets 0.36mm/28 Gauge	£12.00	200
<i>Omnican Lance Soft</i> 0.3mm/30 Gauge	£5.45	200
<i>OneTouch Comfort</i> Lancets 0.20mm/33 Gauge	£7.63	200
<i>OneTouch Delica</i> Lancets 0.32mm/30 Gauge	£7.63	200
<i>OneTouch UltraSoft</i> Lancets 0.4mm/28 Gauge	£7.62 (2 x 100)	100
<i>Softclix</i> Lancets 0.4mm/28 Gauge	£7.85	200
<i>Softclix XL</i> Lancets 0.8mm/21 Gauge	£7.84 (4 x 50)	50
<i>TRUEplus</i> Lancets 0.195mm/33 Gauge	£5.80 (2 x 100)	100
<i>TRUEplus</i> Lancets 0.32mm/30 Gauge	£5.80 (2 x 100)	100
<i>Thin</i> Lancets 0.36mm/28 Gauge	£7.56	200
<i>Unilet ComforTouch</i> Lancets 0.375mm/28 Gauge	£7.07 (200) £7.46 (2 x 100)	100 & 200
<i>Unilet Eco</i> Lancets 0.375mm/28 Gauge	£5.59 (200) £5.98 (2 x 100)	100 & 200
<i>Unilet Superlite</i> Lancets General Purpose 0.66mm/23 gauge	£7.21 (200) £7.60 (2 x 100)	100 & 200
<i>Unistik 3 Comfort</i> Lancets 1.8mm/28 Gauge	£12.34 (200) £12.96 (4 x 50) £12.62 (2 x 100)	50, 100 & 200
<i>Unistik 3 Extra</i> Lancets 2.0mm/21 Gauge	£12.34 (200) £12.62 (2 x 100)	100 & 200
<i>Unistik 3 Gentle</i> Lancets 1.5mm/30 Gauge	£12.00 (200) £12.96 (4 X 50) £12.00 (2 X 100)	50, 100 & 200
<i>Unistik 3 Normal</i> Lancets 1.8mm/23 Gauge	£12.34 (200) £12.96 (4 X 50) £12.62 (2 X 100)	50, 100 & 200
<i>Vitrex Gentle</i> Lancets 0.36mm/28 Gauge	£6.13 (200) £6.38 (2 X 100)	100 & 200
<i>iCare Advanced</i> Lancets 0.38mm/30 Gauge	£4.45 (200) £5.70 (2 X 100)	100 & 200
Safety Lancets		
Low cost Lancets		

The table reveals the range of pack sizes available for each product and the variable pricing dependent upon pack size ordered. In general, the larger the pack size, the lower the unit price per lancet.

The top 5 lancets prescribed (by cost) within each CCG is shown in the four tables below:

LECCG Top 5 Lancets	Total Items	Total Act Cost	Cost/200	Pack size
<i>Omnican Lance Soft</i> 0.3mm/30 Gauge	894	£4,507.23	£5.45	200
<i>Softclix</i> Lancets 0.4mm/28 Gauge	625	£4,480.37	£7.82	200
<i>FastClix</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	447	£4,108.45	£9.64	204

<i>Multiclix</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	226	£2,047.23	£9.60	204
<i>FreeStyle</i> Lancets 0.5mm/28 Gauge	272	£1,828.01	£7.33	200

LWCCG Top 5 Lancets	Total Items	Total Act Cost	Cost/200	Pack size
<i>FastClix</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	518	£4,908.82	9.64	204
<i>Multiclix</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	239	£2,374.28	9.60	204
<i>FreeStyle</i> Lancets 0.5mm/28 Gauge	271	£1,836.33	7.33	200
<i>Microlet</i> Lancets 0.5mm/28 Gauge	303	£1,270.64	7.44	100 & 200
<i>Omnican Lance Soft</i> 0.3mm/30 Gauge	210	£1,029.59	5.45	200

SLCCG Top 5 Lancets	Total Items	Total Act Cost	Cost/200	Pack size
<i>FastClix</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	289	£2,669.10	£9.64	204
<i>Greenlan</i> Lancets 0.35mm/28 Gauge	389	£1,212.83	£6.00	100 & 200
<i>Multiclix</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	130	£1,195.89	£9.60	204
<i>FreeStyle</i> Lancets 0.5mm/28 Gauge	146	£977.37	£7.33	200
<i>Glucorx</i> Lancets 0.31mm/30 Gauge	190	£967.75	£5.50	200

SWLCCG Top 5 Lancets	Total Items	Total Act Cost	Cost/200	Pack size
<i>FastClix</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	257	£2,396.90	£9.64	204
<i>FreeStyle</i> Lancets 0.5mm/28 Gauge	152	£1,027.86	£7.33	200
<i>Multiclix</i> Lancets 0.3mm/30 Gauge	83	£826.82	£9.60	204
<i>Microlet</i> Lancets 0.5mm/28 Gauge	142	£612.81	£7.44	100 & 200
<i>TRUEplus</i> Lancets 0.32mm/30 Gauge	193	£540.63	£5.80	100

These tables illustrate both the scale of use of higher cost products and the extent to which lower cost lancets have gained market share in some Lincolnshire CCGs.

Lower cost lancets

There are a number of lower cost lancets now available which are a 'universal fit' for most of the finger pricking devices. These products are approximately 25 – 50% less costly than the market leaders.

PACEF Recommendation:

Following review, the preferred lower cost lancets in Lincolnshire are *Apollo Twist*, *Glucorx Lancets*, *iCare Advanced*, *Mylife lancets* and *Omnican Lance Soft*. Costs are between £4.50 and £5.50 per pack of 200. See Appendix 1 for compatibility with finger pricking devices.

Key information about each product is tabulated below:

Lower Cost Lancets	Specification	Pack Size	Cost/200
<i>Apollo Twist</i>	0.36mm/28 gauge	200	£4.50
<i>Glucorx</i>	0.31mm/30 gauge	200	£5.50
<i>iCare Advanced</i>	0.38mm/30 gauge	100 & 200	£4.45
<i>Mylife lancets</i> & multicolour lancets (NB not safety lancets)	0.3mm/30 gauge	200	£5.50
<i>Omnican Lance Soft</i>	0.3mm/30 gauge	200	£5.45

If these products were prescribed preferentially, Lincolnshire expenditure on single use lancets would be reduced by £77,000 p.a. Broken down by CCG, these figures are as follows:

	Potential saving pa if lower cost lancets preferred
Lincolnshire East CCG	£29,828
Lincolnshire West CCG	£20,575
South Lincolnshire CCG	£14,833
South West Lincolnshire CCG	£11,946
Lincolnshire	£77,182

Prescribed Quantities

It is also important to consider pack size when prescribing lancets. If the number of tests that a patient is carrying out per day is low, prescribing lancets in packs of 100 rather than 200 may be more cost effective and reduce waste. Prescribing one of the lower cost products above in a quantity of 100 is one option; alternatively, consider one of the following lower cost products which are also available in packs of 100:

Low cost lancets	Specification	Pack size	Cost/100
<i>CareSens</i>	0.31mm/30 gauge	100	£2.95
	0.36mm/28 gauge		
<i>TRUEplus</i>	0.32mm/30 gauge	100	£2.90
	0.195mm/33 gauge		
<i>iCare Advanced</i>	0.38mm/30 gauge	100	£2.85

PACEF Recommendation:

Specialist Diabetes Nurses have stressed to us the significant waste associated with over-ordering or stock-piling of lancets that are ultimately never used. Prescribers are urged to review their prescribing of single use lancets with a view to transferring patients to lower cost products where appropriate. Quantities prescribed and frequency of script collection should also be considered to minimize the risk of over-ordering or stock-piling.

PACEF Recommendation:

Prescribers are also urged to be wary of direct patient requests for a particular brand of lancet as these can sometimes be driven by direct marketing to patients linked to the current meter or blood glucose testing strip the patient is using. In general, direct patient requests for higher cost lancets should be refused unless there is a good clinical reason for a particular brand of lancet to be supplied.

Lancet Choices for Specific Circumstances

(1) Safety Lancets

There are a number of safety lancets available in which the needle automatically retracts after use to reduce the risk of needle-stick injuries. **These lancets are usually reserved for use by healthcare workers obtaining blood samples for diagnostic testing to reduce the risk of needle stick injury. Exceptionally, they are also offered as an option to patients with poor manual dexterity who have been unable to manage conventional lancets or even multi-lancet devices (see (2)).**

PACEF Recommendation:

Safety lancets should usually be reserved solely for use by healthcare workers to reduce the risk of needle stick injury. Exceptionally they should also be available at the request of a Specialist Diabetes Nurse for patients with poor manual dexterity who have been unable to manage conventional lancets or even multi-lancet devices.

The table below lists the safety lancets available on *Tariff*. These products are high cost and should not usually be prescribed for individual patient use.

Safety Lancets	Pack size	Cost per 200 lancets
<i>Apollo Pressure-Activated Safety Lancets</i>	100	£11.98 (2 x100)
<i>Medisafe Solo</i>	200	£10.75
<i>Mylife Safety</i>	200	£12.00
<i>Sarstedt Safety</i>	200	£10.92
<i>Sterilance Lite II Safety</i>	100	£11.40
<i>Unistik 3</i>	50	£12.96
	100	£12.62
	200	£12.34

(2) Multi-lancet devices

Multi-lancet devices consist of a lancet drum which attaches to the finger-pricking device; when finished the drum is detached and disposed of in the normal waste.

This type of device may be advantageous for patients with restricted manual dexterity or where disposal of sharps may be difficult or impractical.

Multi-lancet Devices	Pack size	Cost per pack
Fastclix	204	£9.83
Multiclix	204	£9.79

References

Drug Tariff July 2015
MIMS March 2015

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Appendix 1

Low cost lancets compatible with finger pricking devices

BNF name	Size	Price per pack of 200 lancets (June 2015 DT)	Price per lancet	Auto Lancet (Owen Mumford)	Autolet impression (Owen Mumford)	BD Optimus (BD)	BG Star (Sanofi)	Easy Touch (Abbott)	Freestyle (Abbott)	Freestyle lite (Abbott)	Gentle draw (Nipro)	Glucosject Dual S (Menarini)	Glucosject (Menarini)	Microlet (Bayer)	Microlet 2 (Bayer)	Monoject/Monojector (Covidien)	Omnilance (Braun)	One touch Ultra soft (LifeScan)	Penlet II (LifeScan)	Prestige Smart System (discontinued)	Pura (Ypsomed)	SensoCard	Soft Touch (Roche)	Vitrex Compact Eject (Vitrex)
<i>Apollo Twist Lancets</i>	0.36mm/ 28 Gauge	£4.50	£0.02	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
<i>GlucoRx Lancets</i>	0.31mm/ 30 Gauge	£5.50	£0.03	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>iCare Advanced Lancets</i>	0.38mm/ 30 Gauge	£4.45	£0.02	Y	Y				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
<i>MyLife Lancets</i>	0.3mm/ 30 Gauge	£5.50	£0.03	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y		Y
<i>MyLife Multicolour Lancets</i>	0.3mm/ 30 Gauge	£5.50	£0.03	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y		Y
<i>Omnican Lance Soft</i>	0.3mm/ 30 Gauge	£5.45	£0.03		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y		Y	Y		Y	Y			Y			

Y – Confirmation of compatibility