

**SOUTH AFRICAN PRIMARY HEALTHCARE LEVEL ESSENTIAL MEDICINES LIST
CHAPTER 15: CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM CONDITIONS
NEMLC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEDICINE AMENDMENTS (2020)**

Medicine amendment recommendations, with supporting evidence and rationale are listed below. Kindly review the medicine amendments in the context of the complete chapter for central nervous system conditions. Note: This primary healthcare chapter has been updated to align to previous NEMLC recommendations as well as the recent NEMLC-approved Adult Hospital Level STGs and EML, 2019 edition.

SECTION	MEDICINE/MANAGEMENT	ADDED/DELETED/AMENDED
15.1 Stroke – secondary prevention	Aspirin	Dose amended
15.3.2 Epilepsy		
- Generalised tonic clonic seizures: Adults	Lamotrigine, oral	Dose titration amended
- For HIV-infected adults on ART	Lamotrigine, oral	Drug-drug interactions updated
15.6.2 Bells palsy	Oral corticosteroids (intermediate-acting)	Added as therapeutic class
	Prednisone, oral	Retained as example of class (listed in the STG)
	Prednisolone, oral	Added as a therapeutic alternative (listed in the interchange database)

15.1 STROKE

Secondary prevention

Aspirin, oral: dose amended

Given that the current tender price of “100 mg” is more expensive than the “150 mg”, the dose was aligned with the recommendations of NEMLC that aspirin be used as a daily dose of 150 mg throughout the STGs, until such time that there is price parity.

Level of Evidence: I Meta-analysis¹, Expert opinion

15.3.2 EPILEPSY

Generalised tonic clonic seizures: Adults

Lamotrigine, oral: dose titration amended

Text aligned with Adult hospital STGs and EML (2019), and amended from:

- ~~Lamotrigine, oral (Doctor initiated).~~
 - ~~25 mg daily for 2 weeks.~~
 - ~~Then 50 mg daily for 2 weeks.~~
 - ~~Thereafter, increase by 50 mg every 2 weeks according to response.~~
 - ~~Usual maintenance dose: 100–200 mg daily as a single dose or divided doses.~~

To:

- Lamotrigine, oral (Doctor initiated).
 - Usual maintenance dose: 100–200 mg daily as a single dose or divided doses.
 - Dose-titrate as per table below:

Dose titration of lamotrigine	
Weeks	Dose
<u>1, 2</u>	<u>25 mg daily</u>
<u>3, 4</u>	<u>25 mg 12 hourly</u>
<u>5</u>	<u>25 mg in the morning; 50 mg at night</u>
<u>6</u>	<u>50 mg 12 hourly</u>
<u>7 onwards</u>	<u>Increase by 50 mg every 1–2 weeks, according to response</u>

Adapted from the Western Cape Department of Health, Lamotrigine dose titration protocol, 2019

¹ Sandercock PA, Counsell C, Tseng MC, Cecconi E. Oral antiplatelet therapy for acute ischaemic stroke. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2014 Mar 26;3:CD000029. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24668137>

Level of Evidence: III Guidelines²

Furthermore, the following guidance for lamotrigine was added, aligned with the British National Formulary:

If therapy is interrupted for more than a week, restart the titration protocol.

Level of Evidence: III Guidelines³

For HIV-infected adults on ART

Lamotrigine, oral: *drug-drug interactions updated*

STG text was amended as follows, aligned with the Adult Hospital Level STGs and EML, 2019 edition and NDoH 2019 ART Clinical Guidelines for the Management of HIV in Adults, Pregnancy, Adolescents, Children, Infants and Neonates.

Note: Lamotrigine does not have interactions with dolutegravir. However, the dose of lamotrigine will need to be doubled when patients are switched from efavirenz- or nevirapine-based ART to lopinavir/ritonavir-based ART because the metabolism of lamotrigine is induced by lopinavir/ritonavir.

Level of Evidence: III Guidelines^{4 5}

15.6.2 BELLS PALSY

Corticosteroids (intermediate acting): *added as therapeutic class*

Prednisone, oral: *retained as example of class (listed in the STG)*

Prednisolone, oral: *added as a therapeutic alternative (listed in the interchange database)*

Aligned with SAMF 2016 and Adult Hospital Level STGs and EML, 2019.

Level of Evidence: III Guidelines

² Adult Hospital Level STGs and EML, 2019

³ Joint Formulary Committee. British National Formulary. London: BMJ Group and Pharmaceutical Press; 2019.

⁴ Adult Hospital Level STGs and EML, 2019.

⁵ National Department of Health. 2019 ART Clinical Guidelines for the Management of HIV in Adults, Pregnancy, Adolescents, Children, Infants and Neonates. <https://www.knowledgehub.org.za/elibrary/2019-art-clinical-guidelines-management-hiv-adults-pregnancy-adolescents-children-infants>