

Prescribing in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) or myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME)

Thurrock CCG and Basildon and Brentwood CCG do not support the prescribing of dietary supplements, complementary therapies or other medications for the treatment of CFS or ME

Patients should be managed by GPs as recommended by NICE clinical guideline number 53-Chronic Fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (or encephalopathy)-Diagnosis and management of CFS/ME in adults and children.

The clinical guideline also states the following:

- Do not use the following drugs for the treatment of CFS/ME: monoamine oxidase inhibitors, glucocorticoids (such as hydrocortisone), mineralocorticoids (such as fludrocortisone), dexamphetamine, methylphenidate, levothyroxine or antiviral agents.
- There is insufficient evidence that complementary therapies are effective treatments for CFS/ME and therefore their use is not recommended. However, some people with CFS/ME choose to use some of these therapies for symptom control, and find them helpful.
- There is insufficient evidence for the use of supplements such as vitamin B12, vitamin C, co-enzyme Q10, magnesium, NADH (nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide) or multivitamins and minerals for people with CFS/ME, and therefore they should not be prescribed for treating the symptoms of the condition. Patients with CFS/ME reported to finding these helpful as a part of a self-management strategy for their symptoms should be encouraged to purchase them as self-care.
- People with CFS/ME who are using supplements should be advised not to exceed the safe levels recommended by the Food Standards Agency.

The CCG does not provide funding for NHS prescribing of these medicines/supplements.

Prescribing of these is of a low clinical priority due to the lack of evidence of any benefit.

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Thurrock CCG and Basildon and Brentwood CCG are reminded that they are required to follow the local joint formulary and prescribing guidance, or relevant Medicines Management agreement.

Position Statement No.	6
Title	Prescribing in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) or myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME)
References	NICE clinical guidance CG 53 https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg53/chapter/1-Guidance August 2007
Acknowledgements	Mid Essex CCG
Version	1
Author	Medicines Management Team
Approved by	Basildon and Brentwood CCG: Prescribing Subgroup, Patient Quality and Safety Committee, Board Thurrock CCG: Medicines Management and Safety Group, Patient Quality and Safety Committee, Transformation and Sustainability Committee, Board
Date Approved	March 2017
Review Date	March 2019