

Provincial TB Services Update: Rifapentine (Priftin®) in British Columbia

November 7, 2025

In August 2020, use of rifapentine (Priftin®) in Canada was temporarily suspended after nitrosamine impurities were detected in the formulated tablets. Nitrosamines are unintended chemical by-products that can form during manufacturing or storage and may increase cancer risk after long-term exposure at high levels. In 2021, rifapentine became accessible again in Canada through Health Canada’s Access to Drugs in Exceptional Circumstances mechanism, under ongoing federal monitoring. Health Canada established interim Acceptable Intake (AI) limits for nitrosamine impurities and indicates that exposure at or below these levels is not expected to increase cancer risk.¹ In BC, the most common use of rifapentine is for TB preventive treatment (TPT) with the three-month once weekly rifapentine and isoniazid regimen (3HP).

Benefit–Risk Assessment

Rifapentine remains listed under Health Canada’s Access to Drugs in Exceptional Circumstances framework, administered through the Special Access Program (SAP). Rifapentine is currently the only drug continuously included on Health Canada’s List of Drugs for an Urgent Public Health Need since 2017.²

The benefits of the three-month once weekly rifapentine and isoniazid regimen (3HP) are considered to outweigh the potential health risks associated with the nitrosamine.

This TPT regimen remains an effective, evidence-based option.

Person–Centred Approach

TB preventive treatment (TPT) is an essential component of TB care and a key step toward TB elimination. The goal is to offer clients a TPT regimen that is acceptable, feasible and more likely to be started and completed. The updated 2025 [BCCDC Rifapentine and Nitrosamine client handout](#) supports informed consent discussions and shared decision-making between clients and providers.

In BC, the preferred TPT regimens are:

- Four months daily rifampin (4R)
- Three months (12 weeks) once weekly rifapentine and isoniazid (3HP)

Supply

Rifapentine is not authorized for sale in Canada and is available only through Health Canada's SAP / Access to Drugs in Exceptional Circumstances mechanism for urgent public-health needs.² The BCCDC Pharmacy continues to procure rifapentine through this mechanism for eligible clients in BC.

BCCDC Website

- **For Patients:** TB Care & Medications (I have TB infection) bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/tuberculosis#Care--&--Medications
- **For Health Professionals:** TB Clinical Resources (Rifapentine & Nitrosamine Resources) bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/tuberculosis-guidelines

For more information

- United States Food and Drug Administration. Information about nitrosamine impurities in medications. FDA; 2024. Available from: fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/information-about-nitrosamine-impurities-medications
- Cloëz S, Frick M. Nitrosamines and TB medicines: Information note and patient FAQs. Treatment Action Group; 2023. Available from: treatmentactiongroup.org/publication/nitrosamines-and-tb-medicines-information-note-and-patient-faqs/

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to connect with us.

Regards,



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References

1. Health Canada. Information on nitrosamine impurities in drugs [Internet]. Ottawa (ON): Government of Canada; [cited 2025 Oct 28]. Available from: www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/compliance-enforcement/information-health-product/drugs/nitrosamine-impurities.html
2. Health Canada. List of drugs for an urgent public health need [Internet]. Ottawa (ON): Government of Canada; [cited 2025 Oct 28]. Available from: www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/access-drugs-exceptional-circumstances/list-drugs-urgent-public-health-need.html