

Important Notice About Medication Shortages

To All Parents and Patients of Melbourne Children's Clinic

We want to let you know about ongoing shortages of Concerta and Ritalin LA in Australia. These shortages may last for some time, possibly until the end of the year. This could affect your child's treatment.

What the TGA Says

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) has reported serious problems with the availability of Concerta and Ritalin LA. We don't know exactly when these medicines will be available again. Please visit the [TGA website](#) for the latest updates.

Getting a New Prescription

If your child cannot get their usual medicine because of the shortage, you will need to make an appointment with your paediatrician for a telehealth (phone or video) consultation. Your child must attend this appointment, and you must have a valid referral.

During the appointment, your paediatrician will discuss options and may need to prescribe a different medication. These appointments are usually ----brief and may be bulk-billed (no cost to you). This shorter appointment is just to arrange medicine for your child because of the shortage, so other issues can be discussed later during your child's regular review appointment.

We Usually Try to Book Appointments Within a Week

Other Medication Options

We understand how important your child's treatment is. Here are some options we can consider if your usual medication is not available:

Vyvanse (Lisdexamfetamine)

Vyvanse is a long-acting stimulant. It starts working in about 45-60 minutes and may last 12–13 hours. If your child has never taken Vyvanse before, we start with a low dose and adjust as needed.

Possible side effects include:

- Loss of appetite (may last 12-15 hours)
- Trouble sleeping
- Anxiety
- Weight loss
- Irritability

Side effects usually improve after a few days to a week.

If your child begins Vyvanse, they will need another appointment soon after to see how they are doing.

Click here for further information: [Vyvanse - Things You Need To Know \(PDF\)](#)

Short-Acting Ritalin

Short-acting Ritalin is another option. It works in about 30 minutes and lasts 3–4 hours.

Because it wears off faster, your child may need to take it multiple times a day.

It is a restricted medication, so it must be stored and given by the school if needed during school hours.

Common side effects include:

- Loss of appetite
- Mood swings or irritability when it wears off

If your child was already taking Concerta or Ritalin LA, they may have taken this form before.

Guanfacine (Intuniv)

Guanfacine is a non-stimulant medication we can consider.

Possible side effects are:

- Tiredness or sleepiness
- Low blood pressure
- Dry mouth
- Stomach pain or constipation
- Dizziness

Your child will need a review appointment a few weeks after starting Guanfacine to check their blood pressure and find the right dose.

Click here for more information: Your Guide to Intuniv (PDF)

Choosing a Medication

Please think about which option you want to discuss with your paediatrician during your appointment.

Check Your Pharmacy

Before your appointment, ask your pharmacy which medications they have available.

Some pharmacies can make custom medicines (called compounding medicines) that are similar to Concerta, but these are not subsidised and can be expensive. Families with private health insurance may be able to claim some costs.

Some pharmacies might still have supplies of Ritalin LA or Concerta; please check with them before asking your doctor for a prescription.

Another option is importing extended-release methylphenidate from Switzerland, which costs about \$150–200 per month.

We Understand Your Frustration

At Melbourne Children's Clinic, we share your frustration about these shortages. We know how important your child's treatment is.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work to support you and your family.