

Access to Drugs for African Trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness)

Due to difficulties by some **GeoSentinel** sites in obtaining drugs for patients acutely ill with sleeping sickness, **GeoSentinel** has worked with ISTM WHO Liaison Prof. Louis Loutan in Geneva and Dr. Perez Simarro at WHO, Geneva to compile the following information.

Sleeping sickness is restricted in distribution to sub-Saharan and Southern Africa. The risk is highest for those visiting National Parks or Game Reserves in particular in East and Southern Africa. The most common subspecies affecting travellers is *T.b. rhodesiense*, which causes the acute form of the disease. In addition to supportive intensive care treatment, urgent treatment targeting the parasite is usually needed in these patients.

Drugs for sleeping sickness treatment are not marketed at all and can only be obtained via the WHO. The drugs are provided free of charge thanks to an agreement signed with sanofi-aventis (eflornithine, melarsoprol and pentamidine) and Bayer Schering Pharma (suramin and nifurtimox).

Drugs have to be requested from the WHO during usual business hours:

simarrop@who.int ++41. 794 682 726 or ++41. 227 911 345

francoj@who.int ++41. 796 198 535 or ++41. 227 913 313

Due to the acuteness of the disease and the usual urgent need for treatment, WHO supports selected centres (see Table on next page) to stock limited supplies of drugs. These centres may be contacted to receive immediate initial doses of drug while waiting for the full treatment from WHO. Drugs from Geneva are targeted to reach the requesting Institution within 24 to 48 hours from the time of shipping depending on the distance between the Institution and Geneva.

WHO has set up a surveillance system to collect information on imported African trypanosomiasis cases diagnosed outside of disease endemic countries. Consequently WHO is kindly requesting information as regarding any such travel-related sleeping sickness cases diagnosed at the e-mail addresses above.

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Institution	Location	Contact person	Charge	Phone No	e-mail address	Comments
Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen NHS Foundation Trust	Liverpool UK	Jarred Livesey	Pharmacy purchasing manager /	+44 (0)151 706 2084	Jarred.Livesey@rlbuht.nhs.uk	They hold stock of these medicines for the North of England, Scotland, and N. Ireland.
		Rod Chaloner	Deputy Pharmacy Purchasing Manager	+44 (0) 151 706 2009		
University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	London UK	June Minton	Lead HIV/GUM & Infectious Diseases Pharmacist	+44 (0) 203 317 5255	june.minton@uclh.nhs.uk	
			Pharmacist on call	+44 (0) 845 155 5000		
			Pharmacist on call	+44 (0) 191 233 6116		
FMH Innere Medizin und Tropen- und Reisemedizin Schweizerisches Tropeninstitut Basel	Basel Switzerland	Johannes Blum	responsible physician for Treatment of Sleeping Sickness	++41 61 284 81 44	johannes.blum@unibas.ch	
Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève	Geneva Switzerland	Louis Loutan	Service de Médecine Internationale et Humaine	++41 792500591	Louis.Loutan@hcuge.ch Francois.Chappuis@hcuge.ch	
National Institute for Communicable Diseases	Sandringham South Africa	John Freaan Lucille Blumberg	Department of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases	++27 082 883 9920	johnf@nicd.ac.za lucilleb@nicd.ac.za	
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Atlanta, Georgia USA	Christopher K. Allen,	Deputy Chief, CDC Drug Service	++1 4046393670 (business hours) or ++1 770-488-7100 (24/7 after-hours)	drugservice@cdc.gov	For USA use only
Institute of Medical Science, University of Tokyo	Tokyo Japan	Toshiyuki Miura	Division of Infectious Diseases	+81-3-5449-5338,	miura523@ims.u-tokyo.ac.jp	