# **Hives (urticaria) Standing Order Template**

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| Issue date: | August 2024 | Review date: | August 2025 |

This standing order is to apply until it is either replaced by a new standing order covering the same subject matter or cancelled in writing by the issuer.

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| **Standing Order Name** | Hives (Urticaria) |
| **Rationale** | To promptly and appropriately treat patients presenting with signs of acute urticaria. |
| **Scope (condition and patient group)** | Adults and children presenting with symptoms assessed as being due to urticaria. |
| **Red Flags** | Bacterial or fungal infections of the skin  Autoimmune thyroid disease – may be indicated by an enlarged thyroid  Connective tissue diseases – may be indicated by joint swelling or tenderness or oral ulceration, e.g. rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus  Liver disease/dysfunction – may be indicated by tenderness on palpation of the liver or jaundice, e.g. cholestasis can cause pruritus and acute urticaria can be an early sign of hepatitis A, B and rarely C |
| **Assessment** | 1. Clinical History   * When did the urticaria start? * How often do they happen? * Are there any obvious triggers?   + Food allergies are an unlikely cause of chronic urticaria.   + Some factors may aggravate the urticaria e.g., heat, cold, tight clothing, NSAIDs, alcohol, stress. * Any associated features (e.g., angioedema)? * What treatments have been used? * Previous history of urticaria and other relevant medical problems (e.g. hypothyroidism)?   2. Determine:   * Frequency, size, distribution and duration of the lesions – to determine type of urticarial   3. Examination will usually show the presence of well-circumscribed pruritic wheals that resolve within 24 to 48 hours.  4. Rule out dermatographism, pruritus, other causes of itchy rash (e.g., scabies).  5.Determine whether acute (< 6 weeks' duration) or chronic (> than 6 weeks' duration). |
| **Indication** | **Symptomatic relief of acute urticaria** |
| **Medicine** | **Loratadine** tablets or liquid |
| **Dosage instructions** | Adults and children >30kg: 10mg ONCE daily PRN  Children 2-12 years <30kg: 5mg ONCE daily PRN |
| **Route of administration** | Oral |
| **Quantity to be given** | 10 days supply |
| **Contraindications** | Patients who have shown hypersensitivity to loratadine |
| **Precautions** | * Children under the age of 1 years * Reduce dose frequency to alternate days in severe hepatic impairment |
| **Additional information** | The use of cool damp cloths, reduction of night-time heating and tepid showers may be useful.  When the clinical history does not reveal an obvious cause for the urticaria, an avoidance strategy for potential triggers may be considered.  Dietary investigations rarely identify a specific trigger for chronic urticaria, and are not necessary in cases where symptoms can be easily controlled with oral antihistamines. However, if the patient wishes to, a food diary may be used to record and eliminate suspected triggers. |
| **Follow-up** | If symptoms persist, worsen or are severe then advise patient to return. |
| **Countersigning and auditing** | Countersigning not required.  Audit:  50% monthly of administration and/ or supply records if there are 20 or fewer in total.  20-30% of administration and/ or supply records if they are in the range of 21-100. |
| **Competency/training requirements** | All healthcare professionals working under this standing order must be signed off as competent to do so by the issuer and have had specific training in this standing order. |
| **Supporting documentation** | HealthPathways at [www.healthpathways.org.nz](http://www.healthpathways.org.nz)  Best Practice Journal at [www.bpac.org.nz](http://www.bpac.org.nz)  New Zealand Formulary at [www.nzf.org.nz](http://www.nzf.org.nz) and https://www.nzfchildren.org.nz/nzf\_1  Individual medicine data sheets at [www.medsafe.govt.nz](http://www.medsafe.govt.nz)  Standing Order Guidelines, Ministry of Health, <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/standing-order-guidelines> |
| **Definition of terms used in standing order** | Dermatographism - a condition in which lightly touching or scratching the skin causes raised, reddish marks |

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| **Medical Centre or Clinic:** |  |

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| **Signed by issuers** |

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| **Healthcare professionals operating under Hives Standing Order** |

Only registered healthcare professionals working within the above medical centre or clinic are authorised to administer medication under this standing order.

We the undersigned agree that we have read, understood and will comply with this standing order and all associated documents.

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