



# PROVIDER *bulletin*

February 22, 2018

Dear Provider:

Please note the following memo from the FDA. The full text can be viewed at their website. URL is provided.:

<https://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch/SafetyInformation/SafetyAlertsforHumanMedicalProducts/ucm597862.htm>

## **Clarithromycin (Biaxin): Drug Safety Communication - Potential Increased Risk of Heart Problems or Death in Patients with Heart Disease**

**ISSUE:** FDA is advising caution before prescribing the antibiotic clarithromycin (Biaxin) to patients with heart disease because of a potential increased risk of heart problems or death that can occur years later. FDA's recommendation is based on a review of the results of a 10-year follow-up study of patients with coronary heart disease from a large clinical trial that first observed this safety issue.

**RECOMMENDATION:** *Healthcare professionals* should be aware of these significant risks and weigh the benefits and risks of clarithromycin before prescribing it to any patient, particularly in patients with heart disease and even for short periods, and consider using other available antibiotics. Advise patients with heart disease of the signs and symptoms of cardiovascular problems, regardless of the medical condition for which you are treating them with clarithromycin.

Sincerely,

Bruce Wearda, R.Ph.  
Director of Pharmacy