BADAN POM

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**INFORMATION FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL**

**Lithium and Risk of Hypercalcemia and Hyperparathyroidism**

On February 5, 2014, Health Canada presented safety information related to the risk of hypercalcemia and hyperparathyroidism in therapy using lithium.

- There is evidence that lithium may affect metabolism of calcium, which has been listed on the label of lithium drug.
- Lithium therapy can cause high levels of calcium in the blood, which may or may not be accompanied by elevated levels of parathormone (also known as hyperparathyroidism).
- Calcium levels in the blood should be monitored regularly before and during therapy to identify elevated levels of calcium.
- Many cases of high blood calcium and/or parathormone levels are undetectable or mild, but in severe cases can be life-threatening. Severe hypercalcemia can lead to emergencies such as coma and heart failure.
- The results of the review show that the benefits of lithium therapy in the treatment of bipolar disorder are still greater than the known risks in the use of this drug.

Lithium has been approved in Indonesia since 2004 with the following indications:

- Mania (very tense conditions and overwhelming emotions) and hypomania
- Bipolar depression when treatment with other antidepressant drugs fail
- Aggressiveness or deliberate self-injury

In the product information, reports related to hypercalcemia have been included, but there has been no precaution to monitor the levels of calcium in the blood before and during treatment to identify the risk of hypercalcemia.

To increase awareness, healthcare professionals are urged to do the following when using lithium:

- Monitoring the levels of calcium in the blood before starting treatment with lithium, six months after treatment, and every year on long-term use.
- Monitoring parathormone levels in the blood when needed to identify or exclude hyperparathyroidism.

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- Asking the patient to return to the healthcare professionals when experiencing symptoms of hypercalcemia such as fatigue, depression, mental confusion, nausea, vomiting, excessive thirst, loss of appetite, abdominal pain, frequent urination, muscle and joint pain, and muscles weakness.

National Agency for Drug and Food Control (NADFC) will continuously monitor the safety, in order to provide optimal protection to the community, and as an effort to ensure drug safety in Indonesia.