

## Waterford: Antimicrobial Guidelines - Antimicrobial Guideline: Fluoroquinolone Warning

Systemic fluoroquinolones, (e.g. ciprofloxacin, levofloxacin, moxifloxacin), are associated with disabling and potentially permanent serious side-effects involving the tendons, muscles, joints, nerves, and aorta. The risk of **tendinopathy** is increased in elderly patients, or those with concomitant steroid use, renal disease, or post-solid organ transplantation (heart/lung/kidney).

Fluoroquinolone use is also associated with **QTc prolongation** (which can lead to torsades de pointes and ventricular fibrillation), **C. difficile colitis**, aortic aneurysm rupture/dissections, heart valve regurgitation/incompetence and **neuro-psychiatric disorders**.

See SPC available via [HPRA.ie](http://HPRA.ie) for each agent for full product information.

### Action Points:

1. **Before prescribing a fluoroquinolone**, please obtain an **accurate allergy history**, (from the patient, a family member, primary carer, GP, Community Pharmacy), and **consult the relevant antimicrobial guideline(s)** – it may be possible to prescribe a more appropriate agent.
2. If a decision is made to initiate a fluoroquinolone, all **patients should be extensively counselled**, (i.e. informed of the aforementioned risks and advised to contact a healthcare professional if they experience any adverse drug reactions, particularly pain or swelling in tendons/joints/muscle or neuropathy).