

Tysabri for PBS

THE Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee has recommended multiple sclerosis treatment Tysabri for PBS listing.

It's still subject to approval by a post-election cabinet, but if given the OK will give MS patients across the country access to an "important new treatment," according to Dr Bill Carroll, who's chairman of MS Australia's Research Committee.

He said Tysabri was the first new MS drug to be recommended by the PBAC for more than 7 years.

Tysabri works by protecting from immune cells that mistakenly attack a person's own tissue.

GSK buys Reliant

GLAXOSMITHKLINE has announced the purchase of heart medication specialist Reliant Pharmaceuticals, in a deal worth US\$1.65b (A\$1.9 billion).

Reliant holds the US rights to fast-selling cardiac medication Lovaza, which is used to treat high triglyceride levels.



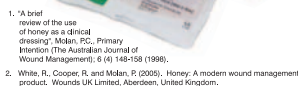
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1. "A brief review of the use of honey as a clinical dressing". Molan, P.C. Primary Infection (The Australian Journal of Wound Management); 6 (4): 148-158 (1998).

2. White, R., Cooper, R. and Molan, P. (2005). Honey: A modern wound management product. Wounds UK Limited, Aberdeen, United Kingdom.

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ASMI excellence awards

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry (ASMI) yesterday honoured three manufacturers at its annual industry awards.

The awards recognise achievements in product innovation and promotions of over-the-counter (OTC) and complementary medicines.

Of the 21 entries received, Proctor & Gamble's *Vicks First Defence* won the award for Best new consumer healthcare product Launch.

Best promotion of an existing OTC product was the Schering-Plough "Clouds" campaign for *Claratyne*, whilst the *Get Moving with Blackmores' Joint Formula* campaign was awarded the Best promotion of an existing complementary product.

The awards were judged by a panel comprising of a pharmacist and a representative from consumer organisation, Choice.

The judging was assessed on

Biota starts trial

LISTED biotech Biota Holdings Limited says it's started phase 2 trials of its long-acting neuraminidase inhibitor, CS8958, during the upcoming northern hemisphere influenza season.

Two trials will be carried out, one in Japan and the other elsewhere in Asia, with ceo Peter Cook saying the move was "another critical step in the evolution of these valuable second generation anti-influenza products".

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DISPENSARY CORNER



A PARAMEDIC in the USA used all of his skills this week.

He was one of several local law enforcement officers chasing a man who allegedly robbed a service station.

Confronting the armed thief, the officer, who as well as being medically trained is an expert marksman, ordered the suspect to drop his gun but when he refused, the paramedic fired several shots, critically wounding the miscreant.

However he then rushed to get his paramedic bag and saved the victim's life.

"Our deputy did what he was trained to do, protect the public and save lives," said local sheriff Robert J. Pickell.

COMPLEMENTARY medicine doesn't usually cause riots.

But that's exactly what's happened in north-eastern China this week, where thousands of people have swarmed around government offices asking for help to recover money from a scam involving the production of an aphrodisiac tonic from ants.

Hundreds of troops were deployed in Shenyang to break up protests by irate investors, who put their savings into a scheme in which they raised ants to provide ingredients for a health tonic.

AND speaking of China, Australian athletes have been warned against having tattoos done while they're in Beijing for next year's Olympic games.

Team doctor Peter Baquie said that although it's a customary rite of passage for sportsmen and women, he said they risk contracting hepatitis B from tattoo artists in China, where the disease is widespread.

"It would be lovely if they got the rings back home," he suggested, and also warned about the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS among sex workers in China.

A third warning was not to buy citrus fruit or melons from street hawkers because of the risk they've been injected with dirty water to make them heavier.

both commercial considerations and the application of Quality Use of Medicines principles.

"These companies can be proud of their achievement in a growing and highly competitive market", said executive director of ASMI, Julie Seifert.

Conference attendees were also warned of rising health costs and diminishing quality of life from preventable conditions unless there's more promotion of "proven tools for self-care".

Presenter Dr Paul Gross of Health Group Strategies called on the incoming federal government to create a new public-private partnership of pharmacists, GPs, patient support groups and govt representatives to establish a "national self-care alliance".

Another speaker, Nicholas Hall, predicted a doubling in the OTC market over the next decade as a result of a "new wave of consumer oriented marketing initiatives and the expansion of OTC products into non-pharmacy retail outlets".

New diabetes kit

DIABETES Australia has launched a new resource for healthcare professionals, aimed at helping young people with type 1 diabetes maintain contact with carers as they make the crucial transition from paediatric to adult health settings.

Dubbed *Stay Connected*, the information kit has been created to "address the challenges of transitional care," at a time of life which can often see young people simply stop accessing the relevant health care, according to Diabetes Australia president Dr Gary Deed.

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