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OTC Update Oral Health

Continuing this month's series on Oral Health care, today we are focusing on treating

Bad breath.

Bad breath is also known as Halitosis. It is a common condition often caused by sulphur-producing bacteria that live within the surface of the tongue and in the throat. It can also be caused by disease of the gums and teeth.

The main causes of halitosis include a dry mouth, caused by certain foods, e.g. alcohol, smoking, nasal or sinus infection, poor oral hygiene and hormonal factors.

Symptoms of halitosis can include a white coating on the tongue, dry mouth and teeth, a post nasal drip, a constant sour or bitter metallic taste.

Treatment will depend on what is causing the problem. **Good oral hygiene** - brush teeth twice a day with toothpaste and take the time to brush tongue.

Use floss or an interdental cleaner between teeth daily. **Mouthwashes** can be effective with their antibacterial ingredients.

Other treatments: Chronic sinusitis sufferers may find regular saline nasal spray use helpful.

Denture wearers need to clean dentures properly to remove odour causing food and bacteria.

A good flow of saliva is necessary for 'sweet smelling' breath. You can stimulate saliva flow by chewing sugar-free gum or eating raw vegetables.

Tongue Cleaning: Tongue cleaners can be used on a regular basis. Or brush tongue as part of teeth cleaning. Many new toothbrushes are designed with a tongue cleaning back.

Herbal treatments:

Sage: leaves can be used to make a tea.

Myrrh: make a mouthwash with myrrh tincture. Or add some tincture to mint or rosemary tea.

Fennel seeds: chewing a small handful of seeds helps freshen breath.

Sydney wins student comp

THE winners of the 2009 National Student Business Plan competition were announced on the weekend, during the Pharmacy Women's Congress on the Gold Coast.

The team from Sydney University took out the top honours, competing against finalists from James Cook University and Curtin University as they all presented their ideas to the congress audience.

It's the second year in a row that Sydney has taken out the comp, which this year attracted entries from 11 Australian universities.

The concepts suggested by finalists this year included a compounding and veterinary pharmacy model, a pharmacy which specialised in women's health issues, and a third focusing on indigenous health.

"The Sydney University entry won on the strength of its innovative ideas," said Guild President Kos Sclavos.

"In Australia, only pharmacists are able to own pharmacies. The National Student Business Plan

Competition helps pharmacy students approach the idea of business ownership and management with confidence.

"We want them to experience for themselves both the challenges and the rewards in buying, owning and operating a community pharmacy in Australia," Sclavos said.

The three finalist teams shared in more than \$15,000 in cash and prizes provided by Pharmaceutical Defence Limited and Gold Cross Products and Services.

Chair of the Guild's Women and Young Pharmacists' Committee (WYPC) Judith Liaw, who led the judging panel for the competition, said the standard of entries this year had been very high.

"The feedback from the Congress delegates has been excellent.

"Everyone I have spoken to has been excited meeting these future industry leaders and sharing in their vision and passion for the future of pharmacy," she said.

The Sydney University team is pictured below celebrating their win, with Judith looking on.



Saphris approval

THE US FDA has approved Schering-Plough's Saphris (asenaphine) for the treatment of adults with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

Competition winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Kathrina Casella of Ayr Hospital Pharmacy in Queensland, who was the lucky winner of our mascara competition in Friday's issue.

If you didn't win, don't despair - we have another fabulous comp launching today - **see page 2.**

Zedmed eRx deal

ANOTHER GP software supplier has announced support for the eRx Script Exchange e-prescribing platform, with Zedmed confirming the move today.

Zedmed last week said it would offer support for the rival MediSecure system (**PD Tue**) and followed up the announcement today with the eRx addition.

Zedmed specialises in practice management and clinical records software for high volume medical centres, with more than 800 sites throughout Australia.

TGACC seminars

THE Therapeutic Goods Advertising Code Council has announced a series of seminars to "inform and update those involved in the advertising of therapeutic goods on the current requirements for the advertising of therapeutic goods to consumers in Australia."

Sessions will be held across the country from Nov, starting in Brisbane on 06 Nov, Adelaide 18 Nov, Perth 20 Nov, Sydney 25 Nov and Melbourne 08 Dec.

The day-long seminars will be presented by TGACC executive officer, Judith Brimer; ASMI Advertising Services Manager Catherine Brunskill; and Craig Davies, who's director of the TGA's Advertising and Export Section.

The course will cover regulation basics as well as the application of the current advertising code, the approvals process and complaints resolution mechanisms.

It costs \$220 per person - more info www.tgacc.com.au/events.

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US diabetes warning

THE US Food and Drug Administration has advised health professionals and patients about potentially fatal errors when using "certain glucose monitoring technology that employs a specific test strip" when patients are also receiving therapeutic products containing non-glucose sugars.

Some products such as peritoneal dialysis solutions, as well as certain immunoglobulins, can falsely elevate glucose results, which could prompt excessive insulin administration.

The FDA's Public Health Notification lists a number of brands of glucose test strips which contain glucose dehydrogenase pyrroloquinoline quinone (GDH-PQQ) which reacts with non-glucose sugars such as maltose, galactose and xylose to produce falsely high test results.

The FDA said most GDH-PQQ devices are used in health care facilities, which should instead use a laboratory assay to measure a patient's glucose if they're also receiving an interfering product.

Bowel cancer switch urged

A GROUP of prominent Australian gastroenterologists have today urged a change to the National Bowel Cancer Screening program, following the recent withdrawal of faulty screening kits.

Prof Terry Bolin, Prof Mel Korman and Dr Alistair Cohen have written to the *Medical Journal of Australia* saying the government's approach "ignores people in critical age brackets" because it only sends kits to people aged 50, 55 and 65.

"We need to see other groups included in this process and more screening options explained," said Professor Bolin.

The specialists argue that the screening program should focus more on colonoscopy, which has shown a 76% predicted reduction in mortality.

Their MJA letter cites Australian data which showed that a colonoscopy every ten years is of equal cost benefit to annual fecal occult blood testing (FOBT).

Earlier this year the Health

Department was forced to recall hundreds of thousands of screening kits issued as part of the program due to "quality issues" which saw lower than expected levels of positive results (*TD* 12 May).

One of the reagents in the kits, supplied by Dorevitch Pathology and made by Japanese firm Fujirebio Diagnostics, was reportedly adversely affected by Australian temperatures.

The affected FOBT kits were not supplied through pharmacies.

US pharmacist jailed

A PHARMACIST who approved a pharmacy technician's saline solution which killed a 2-year-old girl in the USA has been sentenced to six months in prison.

Eric Cropp, a pharmacist at the Rainbow Babies and Childrens Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio was charged with reckless homicide and involuntary manslaughter after the 2006 incident in which the saline solution - 26 times stronger than had been prescribed - was given to the child who subsequently died.

The tragedy has seen the introduction of a number of changes in the USA including mandatory education, training and regulatory standards for technicians.

Pseudoephedrine survey

GRIFFITH University is inviting Queensland and Victorian community pharmacists to participate in an online survey about pseudoephedrine.

There are also prizes on offer for those who take part - those interested should email j.webster@griffith.edu.au before the end of August.

More superclinics

THE Health Department on Fri announced the development of three new GP Super Clinics in Vic.

The new clinics will be located in Portland, Wodonga and South Morang, with these three additions bringing to 24 the number of clinics announced so far.

"This investment will help address the lack of critical infrastructure across the health system," said Health Minister Nicola Roxon.



DISPENSARY CORNER

GOOD news for visitors to the Royal Adelaide Show this year - the Pig Diving will still be on.

Swine flu has seen major changes to this year's show - prize porkers won't be exhibited because of fears that the animals could contract flu from people.

But fortunately pig racing and diving has been spared from the porcine cull.

The show's ceo John Rothwell said the star pigs "have their own facilities, they're only handled by their trainers, whereas our exhibition pigs and so forth are all open really for handling by a large number of people."

FORGET Fosamax - the latest treatment for osteoporosis could be a delicious cleansing ale.

A study published last week in the *Nutrition* journal has found that women who drink moderate amounts of beer may be strengthening their bones.

About 1700 females with an average age of 48 were studied, with bone density better in regular beer drinkers when compared to non-drinkers.

The Spanish researchers said they thought plant hormones in the beer - rather than the alcohol - may be responsible for the effect.

They warned that there was a fine line between a "healthy" dose of alcohol and a damaging one, with higher intakes having been shown to reduce bone strength.

BUTTER may not be so good in terms of saturated fat, but it certainly has its uses.

A group of property managers in China have turned to dairy products in a bid to deter a spate of burglaries in Xi'an.

They've smeared 100kg of butter on the gas pipelines which run outside their housing estate.

"Natural gas pipelines are often used as ladders by burglars, and burglaries are rife here," one of the managers said.

The move to make the pipes slippery was seen as a significantly cheaper alternative to a \$10,000 repair bill for the complex's surveillance system.

FIGHT BRITTLE NAILS WITH PHYTONAIL



If your nails are thickened and brittle with a whitish appearance this may indicate a fungal infection.

PhytoNail is a new way to treat infected nails or toenails.

Each day this week, *Pharmacy Daily* is giving readers the chance to win a PhytoNail pen, valued at \$79.95 each.

Unlike creams or ointments, its formula rapidly penetrates the nail to the very source of the infection. As a result the appearance of nasty-looking nails is improved.

PhytoNail is quick, convenient and easy-to-use. It comes as a handy pen applicator so you can use it anytime, anywhere.

For your chance to win a PhytoNail pen, email through the correct answer to the following question below:

What infection does PhytoNail treat?

Email your answer to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

The first correct entry received will win!

Hint: For more information visit www.biorevive.com.

Use as directed. Always read the label.
Consult your healthcare practitioner if symptoms persist.

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