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Today's issue of PD

PHARMACY Daily today has two pages of news, including the start of a new OTC series on pain (below) and a Revlon comp on p2.

OTC Update Pain - Migraine

This month's OTC column is focusing on treating all types of pain. We hope that the information contained will help staff with giving customers informed advice.

Migraine

Migraine affects approx 10-15% of the population, and often runs in families. Migraine is classified as a severe episodic headache.

Symptoms may include a throbbing pain (often one sided), nausea, vomiting, or aversion to light and noise. Many migraine sufferers can identify triggers that will cause the onset of a migraine, such as certain foods, stress or hormonal changes.

There are several first line drug treatments for mild to moderate migraine. These include -

Paracetamol: Adults 1-1.5g every 4 hours with a maximum daily dose of 4g.

Ibuprofen: Adult dose 400-800mg every 6 hours to a maximum daily dose of 2400mg.

Naproxen: Adult dose of 750mg to start then 250-500mg as required to a maximum daily dose of 1250mg.

Or **Aspirin:** Adult dose, 600-900mg every 4 hours to a daily maximum of 3g.

Patients with severe migraine should seek medical advice, as there are several prescription drug treatments available for migraine.

Govt defends flu response

CHIEF Medical Officer Jim Bishop has issued a robust response to GP criticisms of the government's influenza pandemic plans, which were published online by the Medical Journal of Australia last week.

The MJA said that the role of front-line GPs in the Swine Flu outbreak had been made "extremely difficult" due to deficiencies in the implementation of the pandemic response, such as supply failures, administrative burdens, delays in receiving test results and approval for provision of oseltamivir to patients, and "a lack of clear communication about policy changes as the situation progressed."

Professor Bishop responded, saying many GP divisions had put considerable time and effort into their own pandemic planning.

He said that suggestions that GPs would not cope if the H1N1 09 infection had been more virulent "ignores the professionalism we have seen from GPs and their organisations."

Irish pharmacy revolt

MORE than 1000 pharmacists in Ireland have given notice that they will cease dispensing medicines on the country's community drug scheme (the Irish equivalent to the PBS) from 01 Aug, after the government imposed cuts of about 34% in payments.

The Irish Pharmacy Union is urging the govt to change its approach to avoid a "looming medicines crisis," with about two thirds of pharmacies in Ireland participating in the pullout.

Look at my new iPod!!

PETER Van, pharmacist from Ropes Central Pharmacy in western Sydney, was the lucky winner of a new iPod Touch in the competition run by *Pharmacy Daily* during the recent Pharmacy Expo (PD 15 Jun).

On Friday we hand-delivered Peter's funky new gadget to the pharmacy, and he's pictured just before excitedly ripping apart the packaging to have a play!



Medicines survey

THE National Prescribing Service and the University of Melbourne have launched a new national census to evaluate the Australian use of prescription, non-prescription and complementary medicines.

The *National Census of Medicines Use in Australia* will initially involve a random sample of 3500 Australians aged 50 years and older, with participants asked to detail what medicines they use over the next 12 months.

A second phase will survey Australians aged 18-49 years.

The study was developed after an initial pilot found that in a given 24-hour period there was widespread use of mixing prescription and OTC medicines with natural therapies.

Ice Age 3 winner

WE had an outstanding response to last week's *Pharmacy Daily* competition, with lots of readers sending in suggestions for how Elastoplast and Ice Age 3 can make small tumblers forgotten.

After agonising deliberations the judges have selected Gareth Davidson from sanofi-aventis the winner of the \$80 Ice Age 3 prize pack, for the entry below:

Surely immediate application of an Ice Age 3 pack to the affected area is the most effective way to reduce swelling, decrease healing time and stop tears, helping you forget about a tumble?

Congratulations Gareth - your pack including a double pass to Ice Age 3, a kite, lunch box, height chart and five boxes of Elastoplast Ice Age 3 & Heavy Fabric Strips will be on its way to you shortly.

If you didn't win, don't despair - there's another opportunity to enter to win some Revlon Eyelashes on page two of today's *PD*.

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Pharmacy e-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of SA's Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin deals with anticonvulsant medication phenytoin, and the possibility of complicated interactions in patients taking folate which can lead to falls in phenytoin serum concentrations.

The bulletin is available free from chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au.

Weaker IP R&D threat

PEAK pharmaceutical manufacturers body Medicines Australia this morning issued a statement opposing any changes to Australia's intellectual property regime, as are being suggested by generics firm Hospira (PD 08 May).

Hospira is lobbying to allow "generic copies of innovative medicines" to be manufactured for export while still under Australian patent protection.

MA ceo Ian Chalmers said the move would have a negative impact on Australian R&D, saying "The idea has no merit beyond the commercial agenda of a single pharmaceutical company and could spell disaster for medical innovation."

Hospira, which operates plants in Vic and SA, has warned that it may have to move manufacturing offshore if the rules aren't changed.

Major anti-tobacco push

THE federal government is aiming to significantly cut smoking rates with new recommendations to increase taxes, change labelling and impose restrictions on marketing announced over the weekend.

The plans are outlined in a *Make Smoking History* discussion paper prepared for the government's Preventative Health Taskforce, and include a proposal to progressively increase taxation on cigarettes so that the price rises to \$20 for a pack of 30 - or 67c per cigarette.

The move would bring in almost \$2 billion in extra taxes, and would be the first tobacco tax increase in more than ten years.

Other recommendations include mandating plain packaging for all cigarettes to remove brand differentiation, as well as increasing the size of "graphic health warnings" to take up at least 90% of the front and 100% of the back of the packs.

All forms of advertising of tobacco would be banned, including internet, point of sale and public relations activities.

The move aims to make one million smokers quit, reducing the proportion of the population who smoke from the current 17% to 9%.

"We ask the minister to implement these recommendations without delay," said Kylie Lindorff, chair of the Cancer Council's tobacco issues committee.

"All the evidence tells us that a price increase is the single most effective means to encourage smokers to quit," she said.

J&J Alzheimer's move

JOHNSON & JOHNSON has announced a major investment in Irish drug development firm Elan Corporation, taking 18.4% of the company for US\$1 billion.

The agreement will see J&J "acquire substantially all of the assets and rights of elan related to its Alzheimer's Immunotherapy Program (AIP)," which it will house in a newly formed company to be 49.9% owned by Elan.

The AIP scheme is a collaboration with Wyeth to research, develop and commercialise selective products for the treatment and/or prevention of neurodegenerative conditions, including Alzheimer's disease.

The program will continue, with J&J investing a further US\$500 million to continue the development and launch activities of bapineuzumab, described as a "potential first-in-class treatment" that is being evaluated for slowing down the progression of Alzheimer's disease, as well as other compounds.

In the US alone as many as 5.3m people are living with Alzheimer's, with direct and indirect costs of more than US\$148 billion a year.

Flu vaccine trial

THE Australian Clinical Research Organisation has today advertised in major newspapers for volunteers to participate in "a clinical trial assessing the effectiveness of a flu vaccine."

Prospective participants should be aged 18-64, be in good health, not be working in the health care industry and have not received a flu vaccination in the last 6 months.

The trial will also exclude women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning to become pregnant within two months of receiving the trial vaccination.

More info 1800 154 459.



DISPENSARY CORNER

DOCTORS in China have finally diagnosed the cause of constant coughs and colds being suffered by an 8-year-old boy.

Xiao Ming of Mingguang had reportedly been suffering from "mystery ailments" for more than 12 months, and finally an X-ray has revealed the reason - a drawing pin stuck in his chest.

After it was revealed, the child confessed that he had swallowed the tack last year but hadn't told anyone because he was worried he'd be in trouble.

A doctor managed to remove the rusty drawing pin with an endoscope, and the patient is expected to make a full recovery.

SELF-HELP may actually make you feel worse, according to researchers in Canada who found that people with low self-esteem felt worse after repeating positive statements about themselves, the BBC reports.

Saying phrases such as 'I am a lovable person' only helped people who already had high self-esteem, with the scientists from the University of New Brunswick postulating that "unreasonably positive self-statements can provoke contradictory thoughts in individuals with low self-esteem."

However they added that positive thinking can be helpful when it's one component in a broader program of therapy.

ARTHRITIS pain? Try getting stung by a bee for relief.

A New Zealand company has applied for EU approval to market the venom from honeybees as an arthritis medication.

Nelson Honey & Marketing claims that two teaspoons a day of its honey, fortified with added venom "milked" from bees, has anti-inflammatory properties.

The Manuka Honey product has been on sale in NZ for 13 years, with the venom obtained using "electrical bee milking machines" which use impulses to induce worker bees to sting through a latex film onto a special glass collector plate.

WIN REVLON EYELASHES!



Add red carpet glamour to your look with the Revlon Fantasy Lengths and Lash Flares fake eyelash range.

Revlon has teamed up with *Pharmacy Daily* this week, giving readers the chance to win a packet of glue on eyelashes each day.

The range includes Fantasy Lengths Self Adhesive Eyelashes, Fantasy Length Glue-On Eyelashes and Lash Flares Individual Lashes and is valued at \$9.99 a packet.

The easy to apply lashes are long lasting, comfortable, weightless and suitable for contact lens wearers. So give yourself perfect lashes every time thanks to Revlon.

For your chance to win your very own fake lashes, simply send through the correct answer to the following question:

How many ranges are there in the Revlon fake eyelash range?

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

The first correct entry received each day will win!

Hint: Visit the Revlon website at: www.revlon.com.