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Boehringer approved

BOEHRINGER Ingelheim has received European approval for its Mirapexin/Sifrol (pramipexole) once daily tablet for the treatment of Parkinson's disease.

The approval was granted after the tablet was proven through clinical trials to offer an efficacy and safety similar to the immediate release 3x daily tablet.

Another trial has also found that patients taking the 3x daily medication, can switch overnight to the once-a-day form.

FDA disposal advice

THE US Food and Drug Administration has launched a special page on its website listing recommended disposal instructions for a range of medications.

For opioids and other selected controlled substances the FDA suggests flushing down the sink or toilet to keep them away from children and others who could be hurt by taking them accidentally.

ACCC ticks Merck-S/P deal

THE Australian Competition and CCC has announced it will not oppose the proposed Merck & Co takeover by Schering-Plough Corporation.

Currently both global pharmaceutical companies are competitors in a series of animal and human markets nationwide but plans are in the works for an acquisition/merger which will see the combined businesses operate under the Merck brand.

The ACCC has previously expressed concerns over a lessening of market competition should the merger proceed, but after consultation with market participants, it has decided the market overlap between the pair would be minimal.

Another recent Merck movement has seen the sale of the pharmaceutical giant's share in animal health company Merial Limited, to Merial partner Sanofi-

Aventis.

Sanofi-aventis has subsequently entered into a share option deal with Merck and Schering-Plough to merge its global animal health business with Merial, contingent on the Schering-Plough-Merck acquisition.

This merger has raised further competition concerns from the ACCC, with the commission wanting "to review such a transaction comprehensively before it can be completed".

The Merck-Schering Plough deal is still subject to similar reviews by competition authorities in a number of jurisdictions around the world.

MEANWHILE US authorities have also approved the Pfizer acquisition of Wyeth, as long as it sells half of Wyeth's US animal health business, as well as Pfizer's horse vaccine business to Boehringer Ingelheim within ten days of the buy-out deal.

The acquisition has already received the ACCC go-ahead (**PD** 01 Oct) conditional on the sale of the Australian animal health business once the deal has been finalised.

Gold X recall

THE TGA has today announced an urgent retail recall of Gold Cross Codeine Linctus APF because the medicine doesn't have the required child resistant closure.

The prescription medicine is made by Biotech Pharmaceuticals Pty Ltd, and pharmacists are advised to immediately quarantine stock and return to the wholesaler by 30 Oct 09.

The move follows the TGA's announcement that many OTC cold and flu remedies currently stocked by pharmacies need to have their lids tightened to ensure the child-protective closure is activated (**PD** yesterday), with affected products including many pharmacy group brands such as Terry White, Chemmart and Priceline.

Chateau pharmacists

PHARMACEUTICAL moguls Donald and Nancy Panoz, founders of Mylan Laboratories, have extended their interest in the resort/winery industry, adding the Hunter Valley's Chateau Elan to their growing winery/resort collection, which includes offerings in North Georgia and California in the US.

Students head for India



FOURTEEN allied health students from Charles Sturt University are getting ready to travel to rural communities throughout India in December to undertake medical placements in several clinics and hospitals as well as go out on field trips to selected regional centres.

Disciplines represented will include pharmacy, medical science, pharmaceutical science, clinical science, and forensic biotechnology, with each student's participation set to count towards their degree.

A few of the activities on the jam packed itinerary will allow students to learn from hospital staffers

caring for disadvantaged patients, observe HIV/AIDS intervention programs and visit a leprosy hospital.

"I feel very passionate about rural and remote health in Australia and medicine in developing countries, which is why I want to participate in the India rural and public health rotation," said Bachelor of Clinical Science student, Cassandra Eccleston.

Pictured above are some of the excited travellers including (from left) Cassandra Eccleston, Samithra Radaliyagoda, Monisha Kumar, Josh Adamson and Bachelor of Pharmacy student Roshni Shah.

Relax with this Lavender pack

CONGRATULATIONS to Melessa Bone from APHS Pharmacy, who was the first **Pharmacy Daily** reader to tell us *Lavendula angustifolia* is the Lavender Oil used in Bosisto's Lavender Spray.



RECENT statistics show the average person spends over 2.5 hours a day worrying and a quarter of us toss and turn at night as a result.

Fear no more, because Bosisto's has the perfect anxiety antidote, called Bosisto's Lavender Spray.

Bosisto's has teamed up with **Pharmacy Daily** this

week, giving readers the chance to win a Bosisto's Relax Pack every day this week, featuring Bosisto's Lavender Spray; Oil; a Handy Hints brochure and luxury fluffy bed socks, valued at \$45 each.

The ingenious Lavender Spray product harnesses the clinically proven therapeutic properties of 100% pure *lavendula angustifolia* oil, in a handy Spray can.

For your chance to win this sensational Bosisto's Relax Pack, simply be the first reader to email the correct answer to the daily question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Bosisto's Lavender Spray is a natural antibacterial and _____?

Check out the Bosistos website for hints at www.fgb.com.au.

Accounting

Legal

Financing

Investments

Stay across
it all with
advice that
matters.

 Guild

PAC 2009 starts

THE annual Pharmacy Australia Congress kicked off in Sydney today with the PSA National Forum followed by lectures on military pharmacy, mental health, first aid and a forum on Compliance and Strategic Direction.

Tomorrow's program is equally busy, with the President's Welcome Address, the official opening, as well as keynote addresses on 'Securing your practice advantage', a Compliance panel discussion, the Pharmacy Student of the Year counselling event and a debate on front of shop versus professional services - see pac2009.com.au.

Relenza warning

GLAXOSMITHKLINE has warned US health professionals that its Relenza (zanamivir) Inhalation Powder is not intended to be reconstituted in any liquid formulation, nor used in any nebuliser or mechanical ventilator.

The company said it's aware that the product is being dissolved for some influenza patients who aren't able to take oral medications.

TGA launches OTC tracking

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has enhanced procedures for applications to register OTC medicines, with a new system which allows applicants to self-monitor their applications all the way through from submission to the finalisation process.

Applicants will be able to see exactly where their submission is at each stage of the process via an online workflow tracking system, which posts a status report message when a TGA officer has completed each application task.

The status report messages will include: *Payment Processed-*

Cancer contagious

EXPERTS say the chances of cancer transmission from a mother to her unborn baby are extremely rare, with just a handful of cases suspected over the last century.

The clarification follows a report of an 11 month old Japanese baby girl who was found to have a tumour with an identical genetic signature to a cancer in her mother.

meaning payment has gone through and the application has moved to the OTC team for an administration check; *Under Review* - the administrative details are being checked; *Submission Screening*- a check to ensure all supporting information is has been received; *Evaluation Queue* - waiting to be allocated to the next available evaluator; *Evaluation Phase* - once it's under evaluation; *Verification* - the evaluator requests further details on some of the original information submitted ; *Decision Pending*- the evaluator intends to make a final decision; *Post Decision* - finalisation tasks incl. paperwork are currently being undertaken; and *Completed*.

For info www.tga.gov.au.

B vitamin review

A COCHRANE review of eight clinical trials on 24,000 patients with heart disease has found that taking B vitamin supplements in addition to standard medical care did nothing to reduce the risk of stroke, cardiovascular disease and heart attack.

Diagnosis in 1 hour

A NEW biological test has been developed which is claimed to be able to diagnose mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, depression and anxiety in one hour.

The device, an ear probe electrode that detects changing brain patterns identifying mental illness biomarkers, was created by Australian researchers at Monash University and has been successfully tested on 200 patients.

Reactions to the research have however been mixed, with psychologists claiming that there are already very effective written tests for anxiety and depression with results available in 10mins.

"I suspect that this technology will be useful but it shouldn't be seen as appropriate for most cases of anxiety and depression, and they are the two most common sets of psychological problems," said Australian Psychological Society president Bob Montgomery.

Further testing is needed, but the researchers said the technology could be commercialised in about 10 years.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A US man has missed the birth of his first child after he was arrested for groping a female nurse whilst she was wheeling his wife into the delivery room.

Adam Manning told the nurse she was 'cute' and reached around to grab her breasts and according to police, when the nurse asked what he thought he was doing, his wife replied that "he was just drunk".

Manning has responded to the charge by saying he had "no idea" what came over him when he went in for the grope.

CAN you hold off till March?

New research from Australian scientists is starting to back up the so called hospital 'killing season', at the start of the academic year in February when an influx of medical trainees gets released into the system and the rate of patient mistakes soars.

Researchers looked at thousands of patient records spanning a five year period, from Melbourne's Alfred Hospital, with findings showing the rates of serious complications were almost double at the beginning of the year compared to the end.

High rates of early year 'undesirable events' included seriously high or low blood pressure, wrongly inserted arterial and tracheal tubes, breathing blockages, nerve injuries, inadequate patient oxygenation, vomiting in operation theatres and 'anaesthetic events'.

The rates of these instances were found to drop steeply in March, levelling out around May.

DISTINCTIVE gait nabs crook.

A UK methadone user, Colin Rae confiscated his son's toy gun whilst walking him to school, and on the return trip home decided on the spur of the moment, to use it to hold up a local pharmacy.

The only clue to the crime was Rae's funny walk, recorded on the pharmacy's CCTV system.

Police searched for six months for the suspect, arresting Colin after spotting him walking with the same gait past the police station.

Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature.

Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals which we're sure will be of interest to everyone in the pharmacy industry.

ADVENTURE WORLD is offering a last minute 'South Africa Panorama' tour special for bookings made before 20 October for travel between 01 Nov-30 Nov.

The 15-night 'South Africa Panorama' tour includes game viewing, a cruise on Knysna lagoon, a visit to an ostrich farm and the unique Cango Caves.

Priced from \$5440 including return economy airfares, taxes, domestic flights, accom, entrance fees and sightseeing, breakfasts, sightseeing and entrance fees, all transfers and an English speaking guide - a saving of up to \$3000 per couple - call 1300 363 055.

Or how about a tropical holiday?

CORAL SEAS is offering five nights in the Cook Islands for just

\$1210 per person including airfares from Australia.

The company also has a luxury seven night trip from \$2499, with the specials on sale until 31 Oct and travel up to 31 Mar 2010.

Call 1800 641 803.

The **GLOBUS** family of brands has just released a range of earlybird specials for European holidays in 2010, offering significant discounts and extra bonuses for bookings made before 15 December.

The limited offers includes free flights (just pay taxes) in conjunction with three Avalon Waterways river cruises, as well as cabin upgrades, or free Asia stopovers.

For full details see your travel agent or www.globusfamily.com.au.

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WEEKLY

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