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FDA cuts the fat

THE US FDA has cracked down on beauty salons offering so called "fat melting" 'Lipodissolve' injections.

According to the FDA the medications have not yet been fully tested for efficacy and safety, and as such should immediately be taken off the market.

So far the FDA has received reports of the injections causing permanent scarring, hard lumps and dark skin spots.

Expo correction

THE Pharmacy Guild's National Office has apologised for confusion relating to the Guild Column in Tuesday's PD which incorrectly omitted to mention that the upcoming Pharmacy Expo is a joint event run with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

Veet contact

PHARMACIES interested in stocking the new Veet Touchably Smooth Epilators (PD yesterday) should contact Dateline Imports on 02 9666 3611.



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ASX: Sigma, please explain

SIGMA Pharmaceuticals has been forced to defend the timing of its information releases to investors, in the wake of the huge loss reported for the year to 31 Jan due to a gigantic \$424m goodwill impairment charge on its generics operations (PD 31 Mar).

The Australian Stock Exchange has written to the company, asking when it first became aware that there would be a material reduction in the carrying amount of goodwill on the Sigma balance sheet - and if it was earlier than the 25 Feb suspension of trading, why the information wasn't released at an earlier time.

Sigma said it undertook "specific impairment testing" in conjunction with the preparation of its financial statements, with an extensive

No UK substitutions

THE Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and the English Pharmacy Board have jointly criticised the latest government plans for the institution of generic substitution.

Under the plan pharmacists could substitute brands for generics in most cases, excepting a list selected drugs.

The industry bodies have said that in theory, they welcome generic substitution, but that under the current plans patient safety would be a concern.

"The primary purpose of generic substitution should be patient safety," said Howard Duff, EPB director of England.

"Generic substitution is a professional matter which should be left to the professional judgment of the pharmacist," he added.

According to their statement pharmacists should be given the ability to substitute at their discretion, not as stipulated by a series of pre-determined medication listings.

"Under the current proposals there is no opportunity for pharmacists, who are experts in the use of medicines, to be involved in the decision process of when to substitute generically," Duff said.

Another major concern for the bodies is the added workload the scheme would place on pharmacists 'who [would] need to understand how the scheme operates in practice and then explain the process to patients'.

review undertaken throughout Mar.

"As a result of the testing and review that was undertaken, which was continuing, the Company believes it became aware that it was likely that there would be a material reduction in the carrying amount of goodwill on the Company's balance sheet around the middle of March 2010, leading to the First Market Update," Sigma said in an official response.

The ASX also raised questions about the breaching of Sigma's borrowing covenants, and again asked when the company had become aware that this would occur, with Sigma reiterating that this was "around mid March 2010".

The company said the review had led it to hold discussions with its banks during March.

"Those discussions with the lenders were at all times positive and constructive, the lenders remained supportive and discussions were concluded shortly prior to the release of the Preliminary Final Report," the company's response said.

Too many swine shots

THE British National Health Service has been left with a surplus of some 34 million doses of unused swine flu vaccine, after it reacted to the recent pandemic by over-ordering the shots.

The situation could have been worse, as the initial order contracts between the NHS and manufacturers Baxter and GlaxoSmithKline set the number of doses at 120m, however after negotiations the NHS managed to bring this number down to 44m.

"[The agreement] is good value for the taxpayer and means that the department has retained a strategic stockpile to protect the UK," said UK health secretary Andy Burnham.

To date 6m of the 44m shots have been doled out to Brits, whilst the government has earmarked a further 3.8m shots for donation to WHO for distribution in Africa.

The surplus stock will, according to reports, be stockpiled in case of outbreak, and may be put into use in the next winter season to combat swine flu which UK experts predict may be the dominant flu strain.

WANT YOUR SKIN TO LOOK FLAWLESS?



This week *Pharmacy Daily* is giving readers the chance to win an Australis Ready Set Go Finishing Powder valued at \$12.95.

Ready Set Go Finishing Powder is a silky-soft transparent loose powder that sets your make-up in place for all-day wear.

Wear alone or all over foundation to set makeup and slightly mattify. The 99% mineral silica formula softens the appearance of imperfections, increases the wear of foundation and leaves the skin with a silky, smooth texture. 1st to market in DDS and pharmacy. Ready Set Go Finishing Powder is available in one universal shade for all skin tones.

For a chance to win your very own Australis Ready Set Go Finishing Powder, simply send through the correct answer to the following question below:

What finish does Ready Set Go leave on the skin?

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

The first correct entry received will win!

Hint: Visit the Australis website: www.australiscosmetics.com.au.

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner: **Amanda Ly** from **Australian Pharmaceutical Industries**. The correct answer was: 'Both'.

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Guild

Implant recall

THE sponsor of a French-made silicone breast implant is undertaking the recall of all non-implanted products made by Poly Implant Prothese.

Medical Visions Australia is making the move after consultation with the TGA, following concerns by authorities in France about an increased incidence of ruptures.

Consumers who already have these types of implants are advised to contact their doctor for advice.

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.

HOW about \$1000 per person off a fabulous Italian food tour?

That's what's on offer from Holidays to Europe, which is running a 'Lombardy Delights' trip taking in the fine food, wine and wonders of this delightful region of northern Italy.

The trip takes in Lake Como, Milan, Lake Maggiore, medieval villages and Switzerland's glamorous St Moritz, with 27 amazing meals included.

It departs 26 Jun and is priced at \$7000 per person if you mention 'Holidays to Europe' when booking - and single supplements have also been waived - see holidaystoEurope.com.au/specials.

Or how about a Dalmatian cruise at half price?

Eastern European Travel has released a two for one offer on five May and June voyages.

The seven night *MS Arion* cruise along the spectacular coast and islands of Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro and Albania starts at just \$1670 for two people.

More info 1300 668 844.

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New TGA bills in parliament

THE federal House of Representatives has passed the Therapeutic Goods Amendment (2009 Measures no 3) bill 2009, with the legislation now passing to the Senate where it's expected to be debated in the winter sittings.

The Bill makes a number of key amendments to the Act, including implementing the new biologicals regulation framework, providing more flexible arrangements for recalls and enabling information to be sought from past sponsors of medicines and therapeutic devices.

Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Mark Butler has also introduced another bill which further amends the Act that will also be debated over the winter.

The 2010 Measures No 1 Bill enables listing of export-only variants of registered or listed medicines, provides for the supply of unapproved medical devices to substitute for approved devices in short supply, and clarifies the provisions that allow the Minister to determine a list of permitted ingredients for listed medicines.

Cooking up a storm for cancer



STAFF at more than 80 Chemmart pharmacies across Australia have helped raise over \$80,000 for Ovarian Cancer Australia (OCA) during February.

Individual pharmacies held various fundraising activities such as high teas, bowls days, raffles, pasta nights and cupcake mornings.

An outstanding contribution came from Winnalee Chemmart Pharmacy in the Blue Mountains of NSW which raised over \$5000 through a range of activities which also helped raise awareness of ovarian cancer.

Chemmart executive director Jonathan Layhton said the group was proud to be a supporter of Ovarian Cancer Australia, which "exists not only to save women's lives, but to support and be the voice of ovarian cancer survivors across Australia."

OCA chair Paula Benson said the money would enable the organisation to expand access to help and information about ovarian cancer, as well as develop a support program for family and friends of victims and a Community Ambassador program to raise awareness of ovarian cancer at a local level.

Pictured above are some of the hardworking fundraisers at Palmyra Chemmart Pharmacy in Western Australia, from left: Christie Sipinovic, owner; Armin Mooranian, pharmacy student; Sharon Altamura, assistant; Susanna Diep, pharmacist; Bisera Kasumovic, assistant; Kellie Jenkins, retail manager; Sally-Anne Hau, assistant; Sharyn Saunders, assistant; Miranda Harrington, assistant; Zoey Gracie, assistant; and Mark Duffy, owner.



DISPENSARY CORNER

THE latest health treatment from China is so-called "heat therapy" - in which patients are wrapped in oil-soaked blankets and set alight.

It's the brainchild of a practitioner called Han Li, who runs a clinic in the capital Beijing.

He claims the treatment results in a total escape, with one patient saying "it produces a type of heat that goes right inside you and leaves you completely relaxed".

Mr Li reassuringly added: "It looks pretty dangerous but it's harmless when done properly, and we've never had a patient badly burnt yet".

THIS is a much easier solution than the surgical option.

An obese English woman has lost more than 40kg after being hypnotised into believing she had a gastric band fitted.

The treatment was undergone at a clinic in Marbella, Spain, with the 59-year-old being placed into a trance and talked through the operation as if she was actually in a hospital theatre.

Told that her stomach was just the size of a golf ball and that she would feel full if she tried to eat larger portions of food, she dropped five dress sizes over the next five months.

She was also suffering type 2 diabetes, and the symptoms completely disappeared as a result of the hypnotic procedure.

A POP star from Turkey has made a great leap forward for vision impaired people, after becoming the world's fastest ever unaccompanied blind driver.

Metin Senturk, who has been blind since the age of 3 and is one of Turkey's most popular musicians, wept as he emerged from a Ferrari F430 after reaching speeds of almost 290km/h on the runway of Urfa airport in eastern Turkey.

He was guided by a driver in a following vehicle who told Senturk when to accelerate, brake and turn during the record attempt.

Senturk beat the previous mark of 283km/h saying the drive "felt like a dance with death".