

Pharmacy DAILY

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PHARMACYDAILY.COM.AU

Guild Update

This week's update from the Guild

Womens Congress

Coincidentally, on the same weekend that Australians will decide whether or not to retain our first ever female Prime Minister, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia will be hosting the seventh annual Pharmacy Women's Congress.

The congress, to be held 20-22 August 2010 in Hobart, Tasmania, will bring together female pharmacists from around Australia to discuss the future of community pharmacy.

One of the biggest highlights of the program, to be held on the day of the election, is an exciting Hypothetical panel session.

"Glass ceilings, glass cliffs! Why is getting ahead such a pane?" will feature a highly accomplished panel including Australian icon, Ita Buttrose, and the Guild's own Executive Director, Wendy Phillips.

The panel will consider the pros and cons for women striving to reach the higher levels of the corporate and business world – once regarded as a "Men's Club".

The panellists will provide their practical wisdom on matters of professional progress, including some "do's" and "don'ts".

As in previous years, the major aim of the congress is to inspire women pharmacists to take a more proactive approach to owning or managing their own pharmacies, and to encourage them to influence the direction of the pharmacy industry.

The 2010 congress theme "Reaching New Heights: Aspiring, Achieving, Elevating Your Career in Pharmacy" reflects this aim and sets the scene for an inspiring and motivating educational program, as well as a stimulating social program.

Time is running out to organise your attendance.

Don't miss out on this highly valuable education and networking opportunity. For further information about the congress visit www.pharmacywomenscongress.com.au or contact the Event Coordinator, Kim Thorne, on 07 3831 3788 or at womenscongress@guild.org.au.



The Pharmacy
Guild of Australia

ASMI: don't fear calcium!

THE Australian Self Medication Industry has responded to research published in the British Medical Journal which linked an increased risk of heart disease with calcium supplements (PD 30 Jul), saying the association was "controversial".

According to ASMI, the researchers' conclusion that the use of calcium supplements would need to be reassessed due to the possibility of an increase to a person's risk of heart disease, was arguable due to the existence of other recent studies including the WA Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital's *Calcium supplementation and the risks of atherosclerotic vascular disease in older women* study which ruled out the relationship.

In backing up its position ASMI also cited the Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard School of Public Health's 'Systematic review: Vitamin D and calcium supplementation in prevention of cardiovascular

events' which failed to find a causal relationship between calcium supplements and an increased risk of cardiovascular events.

ASMI did however say that there was "good evidence" that "calcium supplementation reduced the risk of fractures and hence played a useful role in the treatment of osteoporosis".

As such ASMI is urging consumers not to be alarmed by the study, and if they are overly worried to seek the advice of their healthcare professional.

More Board info

IN LIGHT of the recent high call volume it has received, the Pharmacy Board of Australia has updated its webpage with a 'Need more information about your registration?' update.

The update outlines the top five searches conducted on the AHPRA and Board websites (including National Registers, Registering for the first time, Applying for registration or want to change your registration, Registration requirements? and FAQs) and provides links to help users find the information without having to call an operator.

See www.pharmacyboard.gov.au.

Sisterly love is the key

A STUDY published in the Journal of Family Psychology of 395 families with two or more children, has found that having a sister may halt young teens feeling self-conscious and lonely, whilst loving siblings of both sexes promote 'kind and generous' behaviours.

PBS GoQuick

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has listed the new Genotropin GoQuick delivery device on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme effective 01 Aug.

The product is the first disposable, multi-dose, pre-filled pen on the market that has been designed with 'dose memory' technology aimed at reducing dosing error, as well as a needle cover, whilst Genotropin [Somatropin (rbe), recombinant human growth hormone] is a synthetic version of human growth hormone for the treatment of growth hormone deficiency.

Asthma awareness

THE National Asthma Council has launched a new *Asthma and Allergic Rhinitis Patient Awareness Resource* for use by GPs and pharmacists in the lead up to allergy season.

The kit includes a 'Is your nose making your asthma worse' poster, as well as a 'checkbox screener card' which helps patients to identify common symptoms and to understand the link between allergies and asthma.

The kits are currently being sent out to pharmacies nationwide, however to download the screener card early go to www.nationalasthma.org.au.

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Accutane action

ROCHE is facing a US\$12 million dollar lawsuit from a former user of its highly popular acne drug, Accutane.

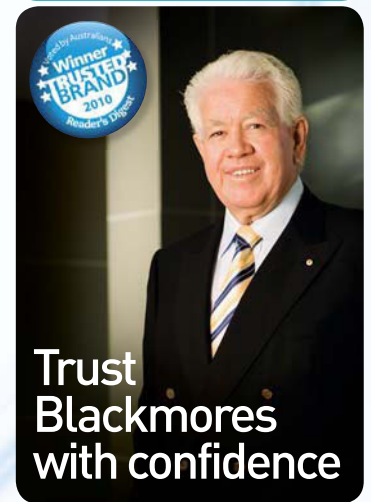
According to reports, the plaintiff, Hollywood actor James Marshall (A Few Good Men, Twin Peaks), has filed the suit after he had to have his colon removed following bowel complications, which he says were directly related to the use of the drug.

No stranger to lawsuits, Accutane was taken off the US market last year, and has been blamed by users for many side effects, including severe depression.

The company has however defended itself saying that Accutane's 13 million former users have known of the drug's potential side effects (including its links to bowel disease) via labelling advice for the last two decades.

Unlike former Accutane cases this one is set to garner some media attention with the line up of witnesses set to include actor Martin Sheen and director Rob Reiner.

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Marcus Blackmore

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Quality of laxative life

A RECENT randomised, double-blind placebo-controlled study of the laxative agent bisacodyl, has found that its use can increase the quality of life, as well as everyday functioning and well being, in constipation sufferers.

Aimed at determining the efficacy of 10mg oral bisacodyl tablets in chronic constipation sufferers, the study gathered information from 368 patients, and showed that "treatment improved all measured symptoms of constipation at nearly every point assessed".

"Oral bisacodyl proved to be an effective, well-tolerated treatment for patients with constipation," said President of the Gut Foundation Professor Terry Bolin.

"It increased bowel frequency and improved the associated symptoms of constipation such as bloating and abdominal discomfort.

"Moreover, treatment with bisacodyl had a sustained impact: The benefit was maintained over the four week study period, with no signs of habituation," he added.

PSA talks National Intern

IN the wake of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia is set to host a series of talks across Australian universities regarding its own National Intern Training Program (NITP).

Designed to help early career pharmacists in the transition between student and practicing pharmacist the NITP is made up of interactive workshops and workplace based activities, and incorporates discussion of both national and state-level pharmacy issues to take into account the national registration changes.

The program also facilitates interaction between pharmacists and interns nationwide, and currently sees around 900 interns graduate per annum.

According to a PSA statement students need to be aware that the course is "is not just an extension of university, but a specifically developed program with a focus on the workplace with the utilisation of

pharmacists' skills and knowledge in practice.

"PSA's National Intern Training Program comes at a great time to coincide with National Registration, it's great to know that if you do the PSA's course in Tasmania and then practice in Queensland that you can be working next to other pharmacists who have done the same intern course," said Fourth year University of Tasmania pharmacy student Leah Hodgkinson.

Tailored to provide interested students with details about the course, how it works and how to enroll, the NITP talks are set to kick-off in Tasmania on 18 August before travelling around universities nationwide.

For details of presentations at other universities and pharmacy schools see www.psa.org.au/intern.

FDA labelling issues

THE US Food and Drug Administration has pledged to publish its draft guidance to reduce medication errors by no later than 30 September.

According to the agency medication naming, labelling and packaging practices play a large role in medication errors, clocking up a whopping 30% responsibility for all fatal errors reported to the US Institute for Safe Medication Practices, and methods to remedy this will feature largely in the new guidelines.

Medicines safety

THE TGA has published the fourth edition of its Medicines Safety Update on its website.

The new edition features an update on Varenicline (Champix) and including product summary information, psychiatric symptoms reported with varenicline and what to include in an varenicline a adverse reaction report.

The Medicines Safety Update also includes a report on the Australian experience with non-adjuvant H1N1 vaccine (Panvax and Panvax Junior), as well as information on the new TGA structural arrangements.

The Update also features details on what to report.

To view a copy of the Safety Update see www.tga.gov.au.

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HIGH TECH HEALTH

DISPENSARY CORNER

A MAJOR blow against dengue fever has been struck in Taiwan this month, after a successful competition encouraging the populace to catch mosquitos.

The winner of the competition walked away with a cash prize worth about \$4000 after catching more than four million mozzies in a month.

Huang Yu-yen from the southern Yunlin province brought in a catch weighing more than 1.5kg - more than double that of her nearest rival.

Organisers have sent a report to the Guinness World Records in the hope that Huang be recognised as the world's leading mosquito-killer.

TOKYO'S oldest is actually dead.

The oldest "living" man in Tokyo has been dead for the past 30 years.

Reported to be aged 111 this year, Sogen Kato was born in 1899, and was found earlier in the week in a mummified state in his home.

Prior to his death, it was reported Kato wanted to become a living Buddha.

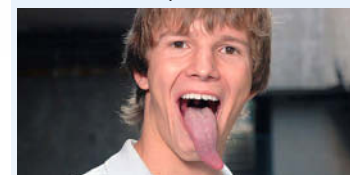
WHAT a prestigious title!

A 20-year old actor, Nick Afanasiev, who hails from sunny California, has been granted the illustrious title of 'America's Longest Tongue'.

Measuring in at a healthy 3.5 inches from his (closed) top lip to tongue tip Afanasiev is a mere 0.37 inches shy of being able to take the crown of 'World's Longest Tongue'.

"I knew it was long, I just didn't know it was one of the longest," said the humble tongue title holder Afanasiev.

Taking him to even greater heights of fame and fortune, his long tongue status led him to secure a cameo role on the tween sitcom hit, iCarly.



WIN A BLACKMORES PRIZE PACK



Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with Blackmores and in the lead up to the 2010 Blackmores Sydney Running Festival is giving away exciting prize packs as part of this week's competition.

Each Blackmores Sydney Running Festival prize pack contains Blackmores Men's Performance Multi, Blackmores Women's Vitality Multi and a Blackmores Sydney Running Festival early bird event singlet and cap.

For a chance to win this exciting prize pack, simply send through the correct answer to the question below:

Name an ingredient from Blackmores Men's Performance Multi

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

The first correct entry received will win!

Hint: Visit www.blackmores.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner: Eleni Calavrias from Niche Marketing Group.