

DCO gala dinner

DIABETES Counselling Online will next Fri host its annual Sweet Talk Gala Dinner to raise funds to support its unique work.

DCO is the only online diabetes counselling service for Australians with diabetes and their families, offering dedicated chat rooms, groups and one-on-one counselling.

Tickets for the event, to be held at The Shores Function Complex in West Beach, Adelaide are still available - more information at www.diabetescounselling.com.au.

Hydroxycut update

THE TGA has reissued its advice to consumers regarding Hydroxycut products (**PD** this week), saying it still hasn't been able to ascertain whether a report of hepatotoxicity relates to the Australian product.

The Australian Hydroxycut products are marketed for indications related to energy and weight loss, and all carry an AUST L number of the front of the carton.

The TGA urged consumers and health professionals to report any adverse reactions via the Adverse Medicine Events Line on 1300 135 237, saying it would "continue to monitor the situation and take regulatory action as appropriate."

Pharmacy as first port of call

THE Australian Self-Medication Industry has called on the government to initiate a consumer-targeted health awareness program, encouraging them to consult with pharmacists as their first port of call for minor illnesses such as coughs, colds and back pain.

Designed to reduce pressure on the already overstretched GP system, the plan aims to empower patients to self-manage their minor conditions.

"These changes would allow doctors to apply their skills and training to best use in treating more serious conditions as well as to longer term preventative health," said Juliet Seifert, executive director of the ASMI.

In backing up its plan the ASMI cites a recent study conducted by the University of Sydney and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare which found that 63% of Aussie visits to a GP are generally due to minor illnesses.

"We need a primary health care system that better encourages and supports people to look after themselves," said NSW GP and former chair of the External Reference Group for the National Primary

Health Care Strategy, Tony Hobbs.

"This will require more resources committed to improve health literacy levels and to support people with chronic illnesses to self-manage their conditions more effectively," Hobbs added.

HOWEVER The doctors have criticised the plan, saying that consultation with pharmacists over doctors could potentially put patients at risk, because not all minor ailments are in fact minor.

"Respiratory tract infections and back pain are often precursors to more serious conditions and require proper diagnosis," said AMA spokesman Steve Hambleton.

"The AMA supports people having greater education and awareness about their health and pursuing self management when it is safe to do so, but much of that education and awareness should come from their GP in the first instance," Hambleton added.

The AMA also suggested that the inclusion of nurse practitioners under Medicare to take the strain off GPs by diagnosing and treating minor illnesses would instead be a more prudent choice.

Natural health update

BLACKMORES has issued a complementary medicine update, about recent research findings, including that Omega-3 fatty acids may prolong the life expectancy of patients living with heart disease, according to a study published by the American Medical Association.

Another US study of smokers has found that micronutrients found in multivitamin supplements may reduce smokers risk of developing lung cancer by the amount of lung cancer causing gene methylation.

And a *Journal of Nutrition* report has led researchers to recommend a significant increase in vitamin D intake during the winter months.

WA mental health

AUSTRALIA'S first Mental Health Commission has been announced by the WA government, which will be established next month with a focus on people living with a mental illness and their ability to recover from the condition.

The Commission will take on and expand the functions of the current Mental Health division of the WA Department of Health, and would eventually be separated from the Health portfolio.

February MIMS Monthly Medicine Update

NEW PRODUCTS

Intanza is an intradermal, split virion, **inactivated influenza vaccine**. Antigen administered into the dermis is rapidly captured by dendritic cells present at high density in the skin. Following migration to the draining lymph node, the dendritic cells present the captured antigen to T cells, which lead to T and B cell activation/expansion, thereby resulting in the induction of sustained antigen-specific cellular and humoral immunity. Antibody concentrations in serum considered protective are generally obtained within 2 to 3 weeks. The persistence of post-vaccination immunity related to the vaccine strains is 6-12 months. It is indicated for prophylaxis of influenza in adults from 18 to 59 years of age. Immunisation should be postponed in subjects with febrile illness or acute infection. It is administered into the deltoid region using the micro-injection system. Each prefilled syringe contains 0.1 mL suspension (containing antigens equivalent to A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)-like strain, A/Perth/16/2009 (H3N2)-like strain, B/Brisbane/60/2008-like strain (9 microgram of each)).

Maxalt (rizatriptan benzoate) is a potent, orally active serotonergic agonist that acts selectively at 5-HT_{1B/1D} receptors. Rizatriptan acts at craniovascular 5-HT_{1B} receptors to cause selective constriction of the extracerebral, intracranial arteries that are thought to be dilated during a migraine

attack. Vasodilatation of these arteries and stimulation of trigeminal sensory nervous pain pathways have been postulated to be the most important underlying mechanisms in migraine pathogenesis. Rizatriptan also inhibits cranial sensory pathways, possibly by acting at peripheral and central inhibitory 5-HT_{1D} receptors that are present in animals and humans on trigeminal nerves. When stimulated, these trigeminal nerves release peptides (e.g. substance P, calcitonin gene related peptide and neurokinin A) that can produce vasodilation and inflammation around blood vessels in sensitive tissues, and which relay nociceptive information into the central nervous system. In animals, activation of trigeminal 5-HT_{1D} receptors prevents the release of these peptides, leading to decreased dilation of sensitive blood vessels, decreased inflammation in the dura mater and reduced central pain transmission. These actions may also contribute to the clinical efficacy of rizatriptan in the relief of migraine. It is indicated for the acute treatment of migraine attacks with or without aura. It is contraindicated in patients with uncontrolled hypertension, established coronary artery disease, including ischaemic heart disease (angina pectoris, history of myocardial infarction or documented silent ischaemia), signs and symptoms of ischaemic heart disease or Prinzmetal's angina. It is also contraindicated with concurrent monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitors or use within 2 weeks of

discontinuation of MAO inhibitor therapy. The recommended dose is 10 mg. Repeat doses should be separated by at least 2 hours with max. 30 mg/24 hours. It is available as 5 or 10 mg wafers [2].

SAFETY RELATED CHANGES

Omeprazole (Losec, Omepral, Acimax), an inhibitor of CYP2C19, is now contraindicated in patients taking cilostazol. Omeprazole 40 mg daily for 7 days increased C_{max} and AUC for cilostazol by 18% and 26% respectively, and one of its active metabolites by 29% and 69% respectively.

Hyperglycaemia or intolerance to glucose has been reported in patients treated with **chlorpromazine (Largactil)**. Patients with an established diagnosis of diabetes mellitus or with risk factors for the development of diabetes, who are started on Largactil, should get appropriate glycaemic monitoring during treatment.

Patients treated with immunosuppressants, including **sirolimus (Rapamune)**, are at increased risk for opportunistic infections, including activation of latent viral infections. Among these conditions is BK virus associated nephropathy. This infection is often related to a high total immunosuppressive burden and may lead to serious outcomes, including graft loss. Physicians should consider this in the differential diagnosis in immunosuppressed patients with deteriorating renal function.

Treatment with **amprenavir (Agenerase)** has resulted in increases in the concentration of triglycerides and cholesterol. Triglyceride and cholesterol testing should be performed prior to initiating therapy with amprenavir and at periodic intervals during therapy.

Paradoxical worsening of Restless Legs Syndrome symptoms described as augmentation (earlier onset, increased intensity or spread of symptoms to previously unaffected limbs) or early morning rebound (reoccurrence of symptoms in the early morning hours), have been observed during treatment with **ropinirole (Repreve)**. If this occurs, treatment review may be required in some cases. The latter could be in the form of drug discontinuation, change in dose increment or regimen, or changing to alternative treatment modality.

Neuropsychiatric events have been reported in adult, adolescent, and paediatric patients taking **montelukast (Singulair)**. Patients and prescribers should be alert for neuropsychiatric events. Patients should be instructed to notify their prescriber if these changes occur and the risks and benefits of continuing treatment should be carefully evaluated. Postmarketing reports with montelukast use include agitation, aggressive behaviour or hostility, anxiousness, depression, dream abnormalities, hallucinations, insomnia, irritability, restlessness, somnambulism,

suicidal thinking and behaviour (including suicidality), and tremor. The clinical details of some postmarketing reports involving montelukast appear consistent with a drug-induced effect.

Hepatotoxicity and hepatic failure resulting in death were reported during postmarketing surveillance in HIV infected patients treated with antiretroviral agents in combination with hydroxyurea. Fatal hepatic events were reported most often in patients treated with the combination of hydroxyurea, **didanosine (Videx)** and stavudine. This combination should be avoided. Peripheral neuropathy, which was severe in some cases, has been reported in HIV-infected patients receiving hydroxyurea in combination with antiretroviral agents, including didanosine, with or without stavudine.

Anaemia has been reported as a very common adverse effect of **bicalutamide (Cosudex)** use. Postmarketing reports of interstitial lung disease (reported uncommonly) and hepatic failure (reported rarely) have resulted in fatal outcomes.

This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing, always refer to the full product information.



CPD Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* Continuing Professional Development Calendar, featuring upcoming events and opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

17 Feb 2010: PSA WA, 'Management of Dyspepsia, GORD and PUD' lecture, 7pm - lgregory@pcwa.com.au.

4-17 Feb 2010: PSA Expedition Education conference in Chile and Patagonia. Limited to 50 people - 1300 139 293.

20 Feb 2010: PSA Victoria, Pharmacy Management, Saturday Series, Victorian College of Pharmacy board room - 03 9389 4007.

20 Feb 2010: PSA Victoria, Diploma of Management, Victorian College of Pharmacy board room - 03 9389 4007.

21 Feb 2010: PSA NSW First Aid Course, 9am-3pm - melenyhui@psansw.org.au.

11-14 Mar 2010: The 19th Australian Pharmacy Professional Conference and Trade Exhibition on the Gold Coast - appconference.com.

26-28 Mar 2010: PSA NSW March Weekend on the theme of Men's and Women's Health, at Mantra Ettalong Beach. 27.5 CPD credits - www.psa.org.au.

14-18 Apr 2010: Australian College of Pharmacy conference Barossa Valley- 1300 651 239.

28 Apr-7 May 2010: The PSA will hold its 35th annual offshore conference in Beijing and Shanghai - details on 1300 139 293.

26-28 May 2010: The NPS's National Medicines Symposium 2010, Melbourne Conference and Exhibition Centre - www.nms2010.org.au.

29-31 May 2010: The AACP's annual ConPharm clinical seminar at The Grand Chancellor Hotel in Hobart - details www.aacp.com.au.

15-18 Sep 2010: Pharmacy 2010, the Pharmacy Management Conference on Hamilton Island - www.pharmacyconference.com.au.

Pharmacy autism awareness

VICTORIA'S Prime Pharmacy Group has officially launched its Prime Leadership Program - Diploma of Management for 2010.

The group, which provides management services for community pharmacies in Melbourne and regional Victoria, has partnered the diploma program with the Learning for Life Autism Centre.

The program aims to equip pharmacists, interns and senior retail staff with the essentials of successfully managing a pharmacy.

The course's unique structure requires participants to put the skills they learn into practice, which will see them this year help raise community awareness and funds for the not-for-profit autism centre.

This grass-roots community pharmacy approach will, according to Prime, create better managers.

Prime Pharmacy Group's Michael Gray said that the course is

designed to act upon the fact that community pharmacy is in a perfect position to serve local communities by providing information on autism spectrum disorders, adding that it would "provide a positive and practical outcome to our participants."

The Guild has thrown its support behind the plan, with president Kos Sclavos congratulating the Group for its awareness initiative.

He said that it was "another example of community pharmacy giving back to the community."

For more course info email Michael.gray@primepharmacy.com.au.

Sun finally setting in

TEENAGE attitudes towards tanning and smart sun behaviour are starting to change, according to a recent survey of 7500 Aussie teens which found 35% didn't want a tan, up 10% from 2004 figures.

WIN A PURE SPA PACK



Congratulations to Michael Bereszowski from The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital who was yesterday's lucky winner of an All Pure Spa® baby pack.

Pharmacy Daily is giving readers the chance to win an All Pure Spa® baby pack every day this week, courtesy of Aromababy.

Valued at \$45, Pure Spa®

offers a simple choice in pure and natural baby skincare and an easy way to care for your precious baby and yourself the way Mother Nature intended.

Pure Spa® natural skincare products use up to 99% Certified organic, pure and natural ingredients.

All Pure Spa® natural skincare products include certified organic rosehip, jojoba, sunflower and natural vitamin e oils - all rich in natural vitamins and well known in particular for their ability to care for sensitive newborn baby skin.

For your chance to win an All Pure Spa® baby pack, be the first reader each day to send in the correct answer to the question below to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Name another product in the Pure Spa® babyCare product range.

Hint! Visit the Pure Spa website at www.purespa.com.au.



DISPENSARY CORNER

THE wheels on the bus go round and round, round and round - until your driver is arrested.

A not-so-diligent school bus driver has been arrested in South Africa after failing a roadside sobriety test at a routine roadside check-point pullover in the KwaZulu-Natal province.

According to his arresting officers the 26-year old driver was not only more than four times over the legal limit, but he had also managed to illegally cram 49 kids aged between 3-13 years into a mini-bus only licenced to carry 16 people!

ACUPUNCTURE is so last week, why not try a knife in the neck - you won't even feel a thing!

A young Russian office worker, failed to notice the 15cm knife that had been stabbed into the back of her neck whilst fighting off a would-be mugger on her way home from work.

Following the mugging the 22-year old woman walked for 40 minutes to her home cranky over the loss of her handbag, but unaware of the pools of blood trailing in her wake.

Her parents were shocked to discover the knife protruding out from her neck, dangerously close to her spinal cord, and at once rushed her to the nearest hospital.

Surgeons at the hospital were able to remove the knife without damaging her spine.

According to her doctors the reason the woman did not feel the knife was that her body had gone into shock to protect her from the pain.



Yet another victim of backstabbing...