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Spina bifida still prevalent

A REPORT by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has shown that there's been no significant decrease in the rates of babies born with spina bifida between 1998-2005, despite early diagnosis, education programs and voluntary fortification of food with folic acid.

Each year about 50 babies in Australia are born with the condition, and women aged less than 30 have significantly higher rates of spina bifida-affected pregnancies than older mothers.

The report has seen a further call for young women to increase their folic acid intake well in advance of conception and throughout pregnancy to reduce the risk.

McDonalds for diets

FAST food giant McDonalds has just signed a deal with Weight Watchers in which it will promote some of its meals as suitable for people trying to lose weight.

Three meals will go on sale today in New Zealand McDonalds restaurants marked with the Weight Watchers logo - chicken nuggets, a Filet-O-Fish and a chicken wrap, all served with salad.

The program is expected to roll out in Australia later this year.

Three years ago McDonalds paid \$330,000 to the Heart Foundation to allow its logo to be displayed on seven of its meals.

FDA generic tick

THE US Food and Drug Administration has approved the first generic version of Flomax Capsules 0.4mg (tamsulosin hydrochloride) for the treatment of benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH).

Most commonly associated with an enlarged prostate gland in men, symptoms of BPH include a weak stream during urination, urgency, leaking or dribbling, as well as more frequent urination, especially during the night.

National hospital revamp

PRIME Minister Kevin Rudd today announced a massive structural reform to Australia's health and hospital system, which will see the Commonwealth take 60% of the funding responsibility for public hospitals across the nation.

The plan, described as one of the most significant reforms ever announced in Australia, will also see the federal government take over responsibility for all GP and primary health care services, while Local Hospital Networks will be established "run by health and

New BMS chief

BRISTOL-MYERS Squibb has appointed Lamberto Andreotti as its new chief executive.

Andreotti is currently BMS' chief operating officer, and will succeed the current ceo James Cornelius when he steps down on 04 May.

Indigenous health endowment

TWO new health centres to help train more Aboriginal health professionals and research indigenous health issues have been established with the help of \$10m in funding for Flinders University.

The money has been provided by transport millionaire Greg Poche, who this week launched the two new centres, to be based in Adelaide and Alice Springs.

The move follows the first Poche Centre for Indigenous Health, also funded by Poche at the University of Sydney in 2008.

The centres aim to increase the number of Indigenous people becoming health professionals.

\$33m Walgreens fine

A COURT in the US has awarded US\$33.3m in damages to the family of a cancer patient who had a stroke after being given an incorrect script for Warfarin - ten times the prescribed level of the drug - at a Walgreens pharmacy.

financial professionals" which will be responsible for running their local hospitals rather than central bureaucracies.

"Sweeping changes to the way hospitals are funded and run will also lead to less waste and duplication and a health system which is sustainable into the future," the PM said.

Additional funding will be announced in coming weeks to train more health staff, increase the availability of hospital beds, improve GP services and introduce personally controlled electronic health records, he added.

Mr Rudd said the proposed reforms would be put to the states and territories at next month's COAG meeting, and if agreement is not reached the plan will be subject to a referendum "to give the Australian Government all the power it needs to reform the health system."

ACP conference

THERE'S just six weeks to go until the upcoming Australian College of Pharmacy conference which will take place 14-18 Apr in South Australia's Barossa Valley.

ACP has advised that places in both the community and consultant practice options are filling quickly - more information on **page three**.

CVD market to grow

A REPORT by independent pharmaceutical business analyst Datamonitor predicts that the market for cardiovascular disease medications will grow from US\$99 billion this year to US\$107b in 2018.

However Datamonitor is also forecasting that only two major manufacturers will benefit from the increase, with AstraZeneca and Novo Nordisk expected to be the only major CVD pharma companies to generate positive sales growth.

Looming patent expiries mean most growth will be in the generic sector, Datamonitor predicted.

WIN AN AUSTRALIS LIP PENCIL



CONGRATULATIONS to Rebecca Dunn of Terry White Management who was the first reader yesterday to tell us that Australis has launched 10 new shades.

Australis has once again teamed up with *Pharmacy Daily* this week, giving readers the chance to win an Australis Lip Pencil, valued at \$8.95.

Line, define and fill your lips with this high-quality range of lip pencils.

With 10 new shades, each pencil shade has been perfectly matched to the Australis Colour Inject Mineral lipsticks so the age old problem of matching shades is no longer - we've done the hard part for you!

This beautifully soft, anti-feathering pencil is a must to complete your lip look.

For your chance to win your very own Australis Lip Pencil, simply send through the correct answer to the following question:

Australis Lip Pencils prevent what?

Send entry to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

The first correct entry received each day will win.

Hint! Visit www.australiscosmetics.com.au.

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The baby carrier that does it all

The Combi Magical Baby Carrier is simple and versatile when manoeuvring your baby around whether you are carrying them on the front or back of you or while lying down or even sitting up! The simple padded straps, washable fabric and support adds to the baby's comfort levels. It has a removable snuggle bed for head and back support so that you can use it for your newborn when lying down and cradling them right through to the time they want to look around and be involved.

RRP: \$229.99

Stockist: Combi - call 02 8399 2223 or visit www.combi.com.au



DISPENSARY CORNER

THIS fellow must certainly be getting lots of fibre.

A 50-year-old Chinese man claims to have survived for the last two years by eating nothing but leaves and grass.

Li Sanju of Niuwei in Guangdong province said he watched a TV show which said a human can live for more than 10 days without food but just water.

"So I thought I would try living on the natural things near my home," he said.

Initially he tried grass alone, but it tasted bitter and he suspected it had been polluted by pesticides.

"I changed to the plants in the mountain behind my house and I never had any problem."

Li claims he looks just as healthy as other people in his village, but admitted he does smell strongly of greenery.

POLE dancing should become an Olympic sport, according to a Japanese world champion proponent of the discipline.

Mai Sato out-gyrated scores of athletes from 11 countries to take the crown at the second International Pole Dancing Fitness Championships in Tokyo two months ago.

She said the sport, previously mostly seen in bars and strip clubs, was growing rapidly with a growing number of federations across the globe.

However some pole dancers have expressed concerns that the "sensual side" of their performances would be destroyed if an effort was made to clean up pole dancing for the Olympics.

SORE back? Tell me about it.

A study in the UK has found that "group therapy" in which lower back pain sufferers chat about their condition together can actually provide some relief.

600 patients took part in the University of Warwick trial, in which six group sessions discussed "unhelpful" beliefs around back pain and physical activity and help them to better manage their condition.

Yes To Carrots Lip Gloss

Fun and flirty new candy coloured C Me Shine Lip Gloss is a new treatment for lips and a new reason to say "Yes To Kisses" according to Yes To Carrots. This lip treatment is formulated with 95% certified organic ingredients, contains extracts from organic fruits and vegetables and is free of parabens, phenols, petroleum and phthalates and carmine. There are six shades to choose from: Playful Nude (Neutral), Rose Bliss (Light Pink), Flirty Pink (Dark Pink), Carrot Kiss (Orange), Red Hot (Red) and Cocoa Loco (Brown).

RRP: \$16.95

Stockist: Key Sun Laboratories, 02 9999 2525



Make your mum happy this mothers day

Frostbland is showcasing four fragrance gift sets that are perfect presents for all mothers on their special day. The Panache gift set comes with a 30ml EDP spray and a 100g Talcum Powder, while the sets for Tweed, White Satin and Lace come with 25ml EDP spray and 100g Talcum Powder. Panache is a confident and flamboyant fragrance perfect for the young at heart looking for a sensual and floral fragrance. Tweed is a distinctive, classic fragrance, with an iconic scent. White Satin is elegantly evocative, sweet, warm and alluringly spicy, while Lace is a light floral fragrance for special occasions.

RRP: \$19.95.

Stockist: Frostbland, 02 8709 8800



Another first for the global haircare industry

Macadamia Natural Oil is the first product to combine macadamia nut oil from the South Pacific and Argan Oil from Morocco. Macadamia Oil contains the highest amount of palmitoleic acid of any plant and this plays an integral role in the lubrication, softening and protection of protein structures. Argan oil is rich in Omega 9, Linoleic, Oleic, and unsaturated fatty acids - shown to be beneficial in improving hair strength and health. Both oils together produce more successful results, and therein lies the scientific beauty behind Macadamia Natural Oil.

RRP: Macadamia Natural Oil 4pc Gift Box, from \$64.95

Stockist: Dateline Imports on 02 9666 3611 or www.datelinecity.com



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