



Supplement update

Today we're featuring an update on Selenium courtesy of *Pharmacy Daily* staff writer Amanda Collins.

Selenium

The much raved about antioxidant properties of Selenium, have in the past few years seen the trace mineral included into almost all combination antioxidant supplements.

But what is it, and how safe is its use? Selenium is a trace mineral which carries the atomic number 34.

Its presence has been identified in at least 20 proteins within the human body including important antioxidant compounds called 'selenoproteins', which protect our DNA and cells against free radical damage occurring as part of the natural process of oxygen metabolism.

Selenium is also found in the liver, kidneys, pancreas, spleen and testes and is important to the healthy function of the immune system.

Due to its potent antioxidant capabilities Selenium is currently being hailed as the "next big thing" in the anti-ageing industry.

Its powers however, stretch beyond skin-maintenance benefits to include its ability to help protect the eyes from cataracts and the heart from muscle damage through the activation of particular substances within the body.

Selenium is often found to work in tandem with Vitamin E, and in some cases when one substance is depleted in the body, the other will substitute it- which inevitably leads to a depletion in the body of both substances.

Recently there has been an interesting surge of research into selenium's potential to fight virus'.

A study from the University of Georgia found that depleted levels of the mineral within the body had a direct correlation with the progression of HIV into AIDS.

A follow-up study by the University is currently underway to see whether maintaining adequate levels of Selenium in the body is the key to keeping the virus in check.

Now for the bad news: Selenium is toxic in high doses- which may result in hair and nail loss, as well as bad breath, a metallic taste in the mouth, dizziness and nausea.

To avoid this, the recommended daily dose of Selenium is 70 micrograms, and it is suggested when looking for a Selenium supplement, to look for ones with 'l-selenomethionine', as it has been found to cause less side effects and won't react with vitamin C (which has the potential to block Selenium absorption).

Long-time wait for Henry

THE implementation of recommendations from the Henry Review of the tax system will require a lengthy time line to fully implement, according to the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

The comment comes in response to the Government's "cautious" response to the tax review, which will see neasures established to improve cash flow for small businesses, a reduction in the company tax rate and specific depreciation changes.

The Guild has however hinted that there are several elements of the policy that "could be improved".

"While tax measures will be established to improve cash flow for small businesses, community pharmacy continues to be heavily impacted by GST supply chain issues relating to GST-free medicines," said Guild president, Kos Sclavos.

"This has locked community pharmacies into a poor cash flow position, which the Guild believes should be addressed.

"No other industry sector suffers this impact to the extent of community pharmacy," he added.

The Guild has also said that whilst a reduction in the company tax rate for pharmacies operating under a company structure is welcome, the policy leaves out a substantial number of pharmacies which operate under other structures.

RGH E-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin gives an overview of some of the "strong benefits of fish oil" which have strong evidence, including for treatment of hypertriglyceridaemia, rheumatoid arthritis and coronary heart disease.

The bulletin is available at auspharmlist.net.au/ebulletin.php.

Vitamin B harm?

A RECENT three-year US study into the use of Vitamin B6 and B12 to reduce the progression of diabetic nephropathy has turned up some unexpected results, including the potential for high doses of B Vitamins to harm kidneys and increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, with a possible correlation between high levels of Vit B and a doubling of the risk of myocardial infarction.

"The Government has missed an opportunity to abolish payroll tax which the Henry Review recommended and should now set up a process with the States and Territories to pursue this vital reform for small business," Sclavos said.

The decision to increase the Superannuation Guarantee in 2012/13 (which was not recommended in the Henry Review) will, according to the Guild, have a negative impact on pharmacies.

The three per cent will impact community pharmacy because, unlike other businesses, those costs cannot be passed on to consumers and is likely to cost more than the business tax cuts," Sclavos said.

Updates to the PBS

THE new listings and changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme have been published on the Department of Health and Ageing.

May additions to the PBS include Amino acid synthetic formula supplemented with long chain polyunsaturated fatty acids compound formula 400g (EleCare LCP, Carmellose sodium with glycerin, Eye drops 5 mg-9 mg per mL (0.5%-0.9%), single dose units 0.4 mL, 30 (Optive) and Dasatinib, Tablet 100 mg (Sprycel).

Other PBS additions include Interferon beta-1a, Solution for injection 132 micrograms in 1.5 mL multidose cartridge (Rebif 44), Lacosamide, Tablets 50mg/100 mg/150mg/200mg and Levodopa with carbidopa and entacapone, Tablet 75 mg-18.75 mg-200 mg.

For more info on PBS additions and changes see- www.pbs.gov.au.

New cancer vaccine

THE FDA has approved a world-first "cancer vaccine", Provenge, for the treatment of prostate cancer.

Provenge does not actually prevent prostate cancer, but rather it may prolong the life expectancy of sufferers.

Treatment involves a series of three Provenge injections, which are custom made using the patient's own cells to train the immune system to recognise and kill malignant cancer cells.

Trials of the drug found that compared to the placebo, 32% of patients treated with Provenge were alive after three years.

Friday's comp winner!

CONGRATULATIONS to Michelle Hyatt from Apotex who was the winner of Friday's Body Butter comp.

See page two for this week's Australis Eyeshadow competition.

US McNeil's recall

THE US Food and Drug Administration has ordered a recall of all McNeil Consumer Healthcare infant and children's Tylenol, Motrin, Zyrtec and Benadryl products due to manufacturing deficiencies which may have affected the medicine's quality, purity or potency.

McNeil and the FDA are advising healthcare professionals, parents and caregivers not to administer the medications as some batches may have stronger levels of active ingredients than indicated, whilst others contain inactive ingredients that "may not" meet internal testing requirements.

The recall also covers products distributed in Canada, Fiji, Guam, Kuwait and Dubai.

For more info see- www.fda.gov.



australian college of pharmacy
education for practice & management

Practical knowledge and skills for practical pharmacies.

Full membership \$231.00 (incl.GST)

Concessional membership (families, semi-retired, 1st yr registered) \$142.56 (incl. GST)

Students and interns - FREE

www.acp.edu.au

Accounting

Legal

Financing

Investments

Stay across it all with advice that matters.

Guild

Locums all a-Twitter

THE Pharmaceutical Locum Company has joined the Twitterverse and is inviting all locums to follow its 'Tweets' on social network Twitter.

See twitter.com/locumco.

You can also follow **Pharmacy Daily** at twitter.com/pharmacydaily.

Obesity & metabolism

A RECENT study into kids obesity and the metabolism of drugs has found a correlation between obesity and changes to the metabolism of medication.

Researchers looked at 16 healthy-weight kids, and nine obese children and how they metabolised caffeine and dextromethorphan and found that overweight children metabolise both substances differently.

Tax to affect smokers

GUILD President Kos Sclavos says the planned tax increases on cigarettes (PD Fri) will provide a further impetus for smokers to quit, and are likely to see more smokers visiting pharmacies for advice.

He said the impact of price was found to be greatest amongst long-term smokers, with smoking set to cost many almost \$3000 a year.

Blackmores backs research

BLACKMORES says its annual Research Symposium is an important way of supporting ongoing research into complementary medicines.

The 2010 event took place in Sydney last Fri, with a range of eminent researchers presenting their findings and ongoing studies into a range of conditions under the theme 'Fertility to Frailty'.

Blackmores Director of Education, Pam Stone, told PD that "there's a real need for more good quality data and clinical trials to validate some of the treatments".

She said that the presentations weren't directly related to particular Blackmores products, but rather covered leading edge research into how supplements can affect different health areas.

Clover for menopause

A RECENT randomised double-blind placebo controlled trial of red clover isoflavones by the Medical University of Vienna, has found that 80mg of red clover isoflavones a day reduced depressive and anxiety symptoms in 109 menopausal women by around 76.9%.

"Research is critical to the future of the industry," she said, with the Symposium covering a diversity of areas including mens' health, womens' health, sleep, protein muscle and obesity, and cognition and behaviour.

Several hundred attendees from the industry in Australia and NZ took part in the two day seminar which featured presentations from 14 world-class researchers.

Brain cancer action

HEALTH minister Nicola Roxon yesterday launched Australia's first ever Brain Cancer Action Week, which will bring together medical researchers, clinicians and Cancer Councils to boost scientific research and raise awareness of brain cancer, which is placed among the lowest five-year cancer survival rates in Australia.

Queensland renews now open

THE Pharmacists Board of Queensland is advising members that registration renewals are now open, and available to complete via the Office of Health Practitioner Registration Boards' (OHPRBs') Online Register Services.

For more information go to www.pharmacyboard.qld.gov.au.

Vita Breath warning

THE FDA is advising consumers to avoid the dietary supplement, Vita Breath due to its potentially hazardous levels of lead.

Most often found sold in markets and on the internet Vita Breath was reported by the New York Department of Health after a patient contracted lead poisoning after consuming the product.

In addition to issuing the warning, the FDA is now conducting its own investigation into the herbal supplement.

MEANWHILE the agency has also approved a second screen test for blood, tissue and bone donors to detect for the blood-borne parasite, Trypanosoma cruzi that causes Chagas Disease.

The Abbott Prism Chagas detects T. cruzi antibodies in serum or plasma specimens.



DISPENSARY CORNER

THE best laid plans of mice and men....

A would-be robber, who did not like to be kept waiting, phoned ahead his theft order.

According to reports, Roy Pharmacy in the US received a call around 9.40pm last week, requesting staff members place all of the store's supplies of OxyContin in the drive-through receptacle, warning them that there may be someone in the store with a gun.

Naturally employees called the police, who searched the store to no avail.

It was however a case of wrong-place wrong-time for one pharmacy shopper who was in the store at the time, who having outstanding warrants for his arrest was subsequently picked-up and shipped off to an awaiting cell block.

THE dead walk!

Melbourne's Alfred Hospital has had to offer a rather embarrassed apology after it mistakenly declared a very-much alive and suffering patient dead.

According to reports Peter Thornton was checked into hospital in March for a severe case of gastro, and then left unattended on a trolley for 12 hours, after which he simply got off the trolley and checked himself out.

Later in the week Thornton visited his GP only to discover the hospital had sent the doctor a letter declaring his time of death on March 9th.

NO cheese for you!

A day-care centre in the UK has received a healthy serve of backlash after it confiscated a cheese sandwich from a toddler because it did not fit healthy eating guidelines.

According to the boy's mother, she packed her child's own lunch after he suffered an upset stomach from food served at the centre.

In a strange twist, had the sandwich had tomato on it as well, it would not have been taken away as it would have been classed as a snack.

WIN AUSTRALIS EYESHADOWS



Australis has teamed up with **Pharmacy Daily** this week, giving readers the chance to win Australis Intensifeye Wet/Dry eyeshadows.

Look out lids, you're in for an eye brightening

experience! Colour intense pressed eyeshadows that are high in pigment content for an extreme colour payoff when used both wet and dry. Use wet to intensify the colour pigments and gain longer-lasting colour. The high-end quality, silky-smooth formulation is long-lasting, smudge and crease proof. In a range of perfectly chosen shades for contouring, shading and highlighting in a variety of trios and quads, show-stopping, unforgettable eyes are just a brush away.

For a chance to win your very own Australis Intensifeye Wet/Dry eyeshadows, simply send through the correct answer to the following question below:

Can these eyeshadows be used wet?

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

The first correct entry received will win!

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