

Pharmacy DAILY

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PHARMACYDAILY.COM.AU

Floods can't stop cricket

PHARMACY Cricket has advised *Pharmacy Daily* that despite the impact of the floods the National Cricket Carnival is still on.

Teams from each state will gather at Victoria's Mooroopna Cricket Club, near Shepparton, to compete between 26-29 January.

Pharmacy Cricket also confirmed that the guest speaker for the Saturday night trophy presentation dinner will be former Test player, Jim Higgs.

See www.pharmacycricket.com.au.

NSW Guild Zone

THE Pharmacy Guild of Australia has announced its annual NSW Zone Leaders Conference will commence on 27 Feb at the Novotel Manly Pacific Hotel.

The Zone Conference will be the closing event of the inaugural Guild Pharmacy Academy NSW Convention weekend (25-27 Feb).

According to the Guild registrations are filling fast, see www.guildpharmacyacademy-nswconvention.org.au.

A new pharmacy opportunity

THE rescheduling of Johnson & Johnson Pacific's proton pump inhibitor, Pariet 10, from S4 to S3 is an "exciting opportunity new for pharmacists", according to Brendan O'Loughlin of O'Loughlin's Pharmacy in St Ives.

Previously only available on prescription, Pariet 10 features the active ingredient rabeprazole, which works to relieve the symptoms of heartburn, indigestion and reflux by suppressing the acid production of the hydrogen-potassium-ATPase enzyme system (the "proton pump" responsible for producing stomach acid).

As such, stomach acid levels are reduced by up to 95%, allowing just enough for proper digestion.

Pariet 10 differs to other OTC antacids and H₂As' on the market because although it takes longer to work (between 2-3 hours), it provides the highest reduction in acid levels, and the longest period of relief (around 24 hours).

"I see the launch of Pariet 10 as

a real opportunity for pharmacy to grow the category of heartburn, reflux and indigestion, as well as pharmacies role in the treatment of those conditions," said O'Loughlin.

According to J&J Pacific around 38% of the population suffer from either heartburn, reflux or indigestion, the majority of whom are either not treating their symptoms at all or are self medicating with OTC products bought in supermarkets.

"Patients are self selecting OTC treatments when they're not really aware of the full range available, and pharmacists and pharmacy assistants need to be getting out and having conversations with consumers," O'Loughlin said.

"Pharmacy is uniquely positioned in the retail environment in that it is a lot more accessible than many other healthcare providers, and so there is a real opportunity for pharmacists to identify patients who are under treating, or mistreating, and then improving their health outcomes and the long term benefits that those patients get.

"There's a huge community of patients that are walking in your door that you really need to be talking to," he added.

Speaking to *PD* yesterday J&J Pacific said that the launch of OTC PPIs presents Aussie pharmacists with a significant growth opportunity, with current OTC PPIs in the US taking a 40% slice of the heartburn, reflux and indigestion market.

Closer to home, the OTC PPI market in NZ grew by 26% in nine months.

J&J Pacific is supporting the downscheduling move by providing pharmacists and pharmacy assistants with a "full suite of Pariet 10 educational and promotional materials", including point-of-sale and shelf materials designed to aid pharmacy staff initiate a dialogue about the product.

The pharmacy launch pack will also include educational materials and will be delivered to pharmacies by a J&J team or sent to pharmacies in the mail, over the coming weeks.

In addition, J&J Pacific's online educational system for pharmacy assistants (JJET) will feature information on the digestive system, related conditions and different treatments available in pharmacy, as well as info on PPIs.

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Early career support

EARLY career pharmacists are being encouraged to provide assistance to pharmacists affected by the country's east coast flooding.

The call comes from both the PSA and The Early Career Pharmacist Working Group, which are asking early career pharmacists to assist in clean-ups, or acting as emergency locums.

"This will be of particular benefit for affected pharmacies in rural and remote areas where access to locum pharmacists is limited," said Chair of the ECPWG, Justin Lee.

"PSA is keeping a register of where help is needed and can help to ensure that ECPs offering their time are used to the maximum effect.

"With the support of the community and their professional colleagues, the road to returning to normality should be made that much smoother," he added.

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.

AirAsia is offering airfares from as low as \$5 one way when booked before 06 Feb, for travel between 01 Jul to 30 Sep.

The cheap airfares are available between Kuala Lumpur and Kota Bahra, Langkawi and Penang.

Other long haul flights on sale including Melbourne to Kuala Lumpur from \$199 - see airasia.com.

Qantas Holidays has family packages to Fiji priced from \$919 per adult and \$199 per child, on sale until 25 Feb and for travel from 21 Jan to 31 Mar 2011.

Packages include economy class seats on Air Pacific and four nights accom at the Westin Denarau Island Resort and Spa.

See - www.qantasholidays.com.au/fijisizzling.

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Kids and alcohol

EIGHTY percent of Australian teenagers have consumed alcohol in their short lifetimes, according to The National Drug Strategy Monograph: *Australian secondary school students' use of tobacco, alcohol, and over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2008*.

Around 24,000 high school students aged between 12 and 17 participated in the study, with findings showing that four out of every five Aussie secondary student had tried alcohol.

61% of survey participants told researchers that they had tried alcohol in the 12 months leading up to the 2008 survey, whilst 23% said they had consumed alcohol in the seven days prior to the survey.

According to the researchers involvement with alcohol appeared to increase with age, with 11% of 13 year olds saying they consumed alcohol in the seven days leading up to the survey, as opposed to 41% of 17 year olds.

Statins unnecessary?

PRESCRIBING statins to otherwise healthy patients is probably unnecessary, according to a Cochrane review published in the UK this week.

The report concluded that statins reduced overall death rates in the population, but said there was no evidence to justify the use of the medications in people who are at low risk of heart problems.

Boehringer purchase

BOEHRINGER Ingelheim has entered into an agreement to purchase a development and manufacturing facility operated by biotechnology manufacturer Amgen in Fremont California.

At present the state-of-the-art facility employs 360 staffers, and measures in at 100,000 square feet with pilot plant and process development labs.

"The technological expertise at Fremont and the state-of-the-art facility will enable us to further strengthen our global Contract Manufacturing Business including new biological entity process development and manufacturing efforts," said Prof. Dr. Wolfram Carius, Boehringer Ingelheim Board of Managing Directors.

MPA supports flooded industry

THIS week, industry giants have banded together, under a Medicines Partnership of Australia banner, to provide a united approach to help pharmacies deal with the damage and ongoing economic impact of the widespread flood disaster.

The Medicines Partnership is comprised of Medicines Australia, Australian Self-Medication Industry, Generic Medicines Industry Association, National Pharmaceutical Services

Legionnaire's alert

THE Department of Health and Ageing is urging healthcare professionals to be on the look out for Aussies who have recently returned from Bali and who experience "flu like symptoms".

The alert is in response to a growing number of travellers returning from the Indonesian island with Legionnaires' disease.

"Over recent months, Australian health authorities have been made aware of 11 cases of Legionnaires' disease detected in Victorian and Western Australian residents returning from holidays in the Kuta area of Bali between August 2010 and January 2011," a statement from the Health Dept said.

"There are specific antibiotics available to treat the disease," said Australia's Chief Medical Officer, Professor Jim Bishop.

"The time between a person's exposure to the bacteria and becoming sick is usually between two to 10 days," he added.

For more information see www.health.gov.au.

Association, The Pharmacy Guild of Australia and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

Together the Partnership has agreed on three areas in which members can assist affected community pharmacies.

The first area of focus involves special trading packages and extending improved trading terms (such as longer credit periods or discounts) for affected pharmacies.

The Partnership noted that because of the diversity of the market it was impossible to adopt a "one-size-fits-all" formula for concessions, and as such encouraged manufacturers wishing to assist pharmacists to contact the Guild to determine how they can best provide assistance.

The second focus for the Partnership is to centralise donations for flood-affected pharmacists and pharmacy staff.

As such, the Partnership has proposed that the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's Queensland Branch, in conjunction with Pharmacists' Support Service, receive any such contributions, and administer the appropriate application of any funds raised for this purpose.

The final area of focus for the Partnership is to also centralise staffing issues by having flood-affected pharmacies in need of pharmacists and assistants contact their relevant Pharmacy Guild State Branch for assistance.

In addition, the Partnership is urging qualified staff who are available to volunteer to assist to contact their Guild State Branch.



DISPENSARY CORNER

THERE'S a wide smile on the face of the former owner of a set of gold dentures worn by Britain's wartime prime minister Sir Winston Churchill.

The solid gold dentures this week were sold for a handsome £16,000 (\$25,000) at an auction in London overnight.

Lionel Willis from auction house Bonhams said the dental appliance was particularly significant because Churchill's most famous speeches "could have been made over the top of these teeth."

"I think that's a rather spooky feeling," he added.

SIGNIFICANT shrinkage occurred across Russia earlier this week, after tens of thousands of people jumped into holes cut in ice to help celebrate the Russian Orthodox festival of Epiphany.

Rivers across the huge country are frozen over due to extremely cold weather, but that hasn't stopped devotees from traditional celebrations which include diving into the freezing water as a symbol of the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist.

Many believe that the water takes on sacred healing powers during the annual holiday.

A church spokesman warned believers to only jump into the freezing water after consulting their doctor.

JAPANESE people really love their gadgets, but this is ridiculous.

Electronics company Sega has gone up a notch from the already hi-tech toilets available in Tokyo, launching special urine-controlled games in public bathrooms.

The so-called 'Toylets' games operate using special pressure sensors in the urinals, with activities including 'Graffiti Eraser' in which a user aims at particular points on the urinal to rub out "virtual graffiti" on an electronic display; or 'Splashing Battle' which sees men rated against previous urinal users in terms of stream strength.

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