

Would you like to win these?



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PHARMACY ALLIANCE GROUP
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PING

PD's Friday winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Rebecca Singh from Harrison's Pharmacy Rhodes, who was the lucky winner of last Friday's Fabulous Nail Care Competition.

For more chances to win see **p2** for the first installment in this week's FGB Natural Products Comp.

Pharmacy under attack

COMMUNITY Pharmacy is the target of a stinging assault in today's *Financial Review*, with the paper's economics editor Alan Mitchell urging the government to allow supermarkets to operate pharmacy dispensaries.

Mitchell's opinion piece is a follow-up to the recent government decision to restrict new PBS approvals to life-saving drugs (**PD** 09 Mar), with the commentator saying that "the cost of the PBS has been inflated by the inefficiency of both local pharmaceutical manufacturers and community pharmacies".

He said that the government pays more than it needs to for generics

due to a "protectionist deal" with drugmakers, and he also slams the government's "failure to force the community pharmacy industry to reform."

"The pharmacies are highly regulated, highly protected and, according to just about every independent review of their performance, highly inefficient," he writes, urging the reform-minded Julia Gillard to give the pharmacy sector some attention.

"Any supermarket chain that is still interested should be encouraged to make space for pharmacies to operate within the present law...that could very quickly give the pharmacy sector access to the increased economies of scale and the sophisticated management of large-scale retailing," he added.

"Under federal leadership, the whole restrictive legal framework of the community pharmacy should be overhauled to permit the development of a modern retail industry of corporate pharmacy chains competing on service quality, efficiency and price," Mitchell's article concludes.

Benlysta approval

THE first lupus treatment in over half a century to gain approval, Benlysta (belimumab), as just been given the thumbs up by the US Food and Drug Agency.

Benlysta is an intravenous treatment designed for patients with active, autoantibody-positive lupus (systemic lupus erythematosus) who are receiving standard therapy, and is the first inhibitor designed to target B-lymphocyte stimulator protein, which in turn may reduce the number of abnormal B cells thought to be a problem in lupus.

MEANWHILE the FDA has also granted marketing approval for GEA Lyophil's new H₂O₂ gas sterilisation product for pharmaceutical freeze dryers, Vapovac.

The product uses hydrogen peroxide to sterilise equipment under vacuum in a three-stage process: drying, sterilisation and aeration - see www.fda.gov.

Hair drug dysfunctions

RESEARCHERS at the University of Boston, have found a link between baldness drugs and erectile dysfunction, depression and a reduction in libido.

According to lead researcher, Prof Abdulmageed Traish, the use of the androgen blockers dutasteride (Avodart) and finasteride (Proscar and Propecia), has the potential, in a small number of cases, to cause side effects which continue well past the discontinuation of the medications.

Published in the *Journal of Sexual Medicine*, the study found that 8% of men taking the drugs reported erectile dysfunction, compared to 4% of those taking the placebo.

In addition, the researchers found 4.2% of men taking the drugs had a reduction in libido, as compared to 1.8% of men on the placebo, whilst a significant number of men on the medication also reported symptoms of depression.

"I am not worried about those who stop taking the drug and get their life back, [my concern is] about those who stop taking the drug, but they don't get their life back," said Traish.

Ditropan Elixir recall

SUPPLIES of Sanofi-Aventis' Ditropan Elixir (Oxybutynin) 2.5mg/5ml, 150ml, are being recalled in the UK after the discovery of non-pathogenic yeasts in some samples during routine stability testing.

As a result of the recall, the company has said it does not expect that new supplies of the medication will be available for 24 months, but has said that tablet presentations of the product will continue to be available.

NEW

Sensodyne iso-active foaming gel

All round protection and sensitivity relief.



GSKJPP0311

For the relief of sensitive teeth. ALWAYS READ THE LABEL. Use only as directed. Consult your healthcare professional if symptoms persist. Sensodyne® and iso-active® are registered trade marks of the GlaxoSmithKline group of companies.

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Weekly Comment

Welcome to *Pharmacy Daily's* weekly comment feature.

This week's contributor is Pharmacy Alliance Group's GM of Retail Services, Geoff Dyer.

Pharmacy retailing around front, middle and back of shop.

Pharmacy is changing.

The discounters are putting pressure on your GP at one end, and the wholesalers and the government at the other.

Price competitiveness is important, but you need to look for other ways to be better than the pharmacy down the road.

What can you offer to keep old customers coming back to you – and attract new ones?

In your **back of shop**, customers want to be able to trust you.

They want – and need – you to have medicine and disease state knowledge, and be able to offer advice.

In your **middle of shop**, they want a holistic solution.

In pharmacy, our customers are patients.

Health is our business, and keeping our patients healthy leads to a long and sustained relationship.

Look to offer additional health related services that add value.

In your **front of shop**, they want to be able to find the brands and products they want.

They want their old favourites, and they want the new products they see on TV.

If you don't have the products they want, when they want them, they will go elsewhere.

And of course, they want all this at a good price.

It's a juggling act, but it is achievable with the right programs and relationships in place.



PSA intervention workshops

PHARMACISTS who want to be able to deliver more clinical intervention services are set to get a helping hand, with the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's new workshop offerings.

The clinical intervention services, now funded under the Fifth Community Pharmacy Agreement, will be covered in a series of one-day PSA (in conjunction with the University of Tasmania) small group workshops which will be held around the country.

"The workshops will give participants a clear view of what is required and what their responsibilities are under these funded services," said National

MATES incontinence

THE Department of Veterans Affairs has published a new Veteran Brochure on Urinary Incontinence.

Available to download on the MATES website, the brochure is targeted at sufferers and covers what to do, medicines and services.

See www.veteransmates.net.au.

President of the PSA, Warwick Plunkett.

Pharmacists who complete the workshops will, according to the PSA, be able to identify consumers at risk of drug related problems, identify clinically significant potential or actual drug related problems likely to be associated with the use of prescribed medicines, and use professional judgement to determine whether any changes in prescribed medicines are warranted to promote enhanced safety or efficacy.

Additional outcomes of the workshops include the ability to understand the need to accurately code and record clinical interventions consistent with professional standards and conventions, confidently and accurately document clinical notes and record information related to drug related problems, and confidently discuss these outcomes with the consumer and the prescriber.

For details visit www.psa.org.au.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A COFFEE a day could possibly keep strokes at bay.

New research published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* has linked low stroke risk with increased levels of coffee consumption.

The Swedish study followed 34,670 women aged between 49 and 83 over a decade, and found that those that drank two or more cups of coffee a day had a 22% to 25% lower risk of stroke than those that drank one cup or less.

"We used to worry that (coffee) raises blood pressure and causes increased heart rate, but it appears to be less risky than we thought," said Claudette Brooks, spokeswoman for the American Stroke Association.

"We're not sure what it is in coffee that is giving women this stroke protection, though."

The study did not note whether the coffee consumed was full strength or decaf.

TWO heads are better than one?

A two-headed turtle called Magda, has hatched this week in Slovakia.

Brought to the world's attention by turtle owner, Roman Gresak, Magda has one large head, one small head, and a fifth leg which moves independently and sits in the middle of her two heads.

HERE'S a tasty dietary treat.

Culture officials from the Chinese province of Zhejiang are hoping to take the world by storm with a local delicacy, spring eggs boiled in boys' urine.

Yes that's correct, wee flavoured eggs are set to hit the world markets following a massive export push by province officials who claim the eggs, which are boiled in urine for nearly two days with their skins off, are not only delicious but healthy.

"They stop fevers and can help you concentrate if you're feeling sluggish or sleepy," said one official.

The urine supplies are collected in buckets from local schools daily during the egg harvest.

WIN A FANTASTIC 'GET FIT' PACK



Pharmacy Daily has teamed up with **FGB Natural Products** this week and is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a get fit pack, valued at \$70.

This fantastic pack includes Clements Iron, a Yoga Mat & Yoga DVD.

Do your customers complain of

stomach upsets and constipation from their iron tablets? Clements Iron is the gentle, effective solution.

Clements contains a special type of iron - an amino acid chelate (Ferrochel™) which is gentler on the stomach, and better absorbed than many iron preparations. Its formula is enriched with vitamins and minerals including energy-giving B vitamins for peak vitality and wellbeing. As a liquid, it is fast-acting too!

Visit www.fgb.com.au for more information or call distributors FGB Natural Products on 1800 003 431.

For your chance to win this great pack, simply be the first reader to send in an answer to the daily question below:

What type of side effects does Clements Iron avoid?

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