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Phones pose no risk?

EXPERTS are criticising the widely discussed study published in the *British Medical Journal* which found no link between mobile phone use and brain cancer, saying that to be effective millions of people must be followed for decades- not just 358,403 over 17 years.

new

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GSKJPDPRP0911

Major insurance rebrand

WELL known health insurers MBF, HBA and Mutual Community are set to rebrand under one name, Bupa.

The rebrand, kicked off with a TV and newspaper ad campaign over the weekend, will consolidate all three major insurance companies into a single brand, a move which the company is saying will "benefit more than three million Australians".

Under the one Bupa brand MBF, HBA and Mutual Community customers will have access to a single website, as well as a single "consistent range of health insurance products across the country".

In addition, under the Bupa brand

patients will have access to a provider network of 10,000 healthcare professionals as well as the biggest retail network of any private health insurer in Australia.

"We are making this change for the benefit of both our members and our business to help us better face the challenge of helping as many Australians as possible live longer, healthier, happier lives," said Bupa MD Richard Bowden.

Urgent Oto-Ease recall

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has issued an urgent recall of Ultra Suppliers' Oto-Ease Ear Lubricant (supplied between 01 May 2011 – 07 October 2011), due to possible bacterial contamination.

The contamination could cause a local ear infection, or in rare circumstances could cause a more widespread infection such as pneumonia.

Patients are being urged to discontinue use immediately and return the product for a refund, and healthcare practitioners are being encouraged to report any adverse side effects related to the product to the TGA.

Speak to the Bank

THE Bank of Queensland will be available to talk to pharmacists at the Reform Conference this Saturday, about what it can offer in the way of services and borrowing. See **page 3** for full details.

Intern transition

THE Pharmacy Board of Australia has published information for pharmacy interns with provisional registration seeking general registration.

The info includes details about requirements for general registration, see www.ahpra.gov.au.

EMA NSAID review

THE European Medicines Agency (EMA) has begun a review of the cardiovascular safety of non-selective NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs).

The Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use last reviewed the cardiovascular safety of non-selective NSAIDs in 2006, and concluded that overall the NSAID benefit-risk balance remained positive, despite a small increased risk of thrombotic events such as heart attacks or stroke (particularly with long-term high dose usage).

The result of this 2006 review however saw the creation of the Safety Of Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs Project, funded by the European Union, and whose research is now the focus of the new 2011 EMA review.

Of particular interest to the EMA is the Project's latest paper titled 'Stroke risk and NSAIDs: a systematic review of observational studies' which looked at observational studies on the risk of stroke associated with the use of individual NSAIDs, and found evidence of an increased risk of ischemic stroke with the current use of rofecoxib and diclofenac.

Unvaccinated outbreak

A NEW US report has attributed the largest American outbreak of measles in nearly two decades to unvaccinated children and returning travellers.

In its report the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that this year 214 cases of measles have been reported, compared to the usual 60 to 70 cases.

86% of cases were found to belong to unvaccinated people, or those where their vaccination status was unknown.

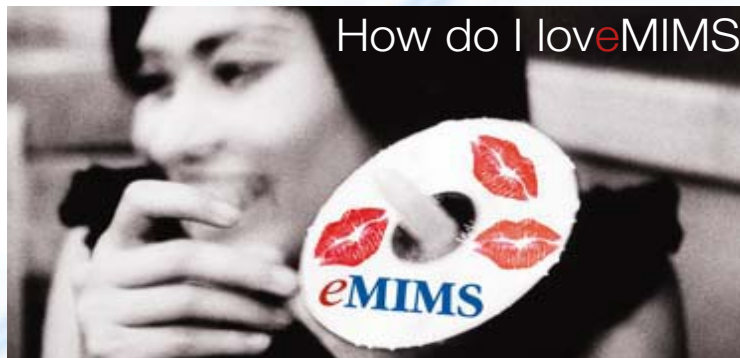
Meanwhile a recent outbreak of measles in the US state of Minnesota has been attributed to an unvaccinated two and a half year old child who recently returned from Kenya and then attended a drop-in child care centre back in the US, resulting in 21 infections and 14 hospitalisations.

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Weekly Comment

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

This week's contributor is

Clint Dowdell,

HiLife Health and Beauty's skincare and beauty expert.

Sensible Solutions

Customers are searching for solutions to their needs.

As "problem solvers" we need to be able to provide these in order to keep our customers happy and our sales at the optimal level.

With summer upon us and the Australian sun coming out in full force, sun smart remedies are a sure way to gain confidence.

Look for multi functional products like the Nude Natural Tinted Moisturiser, comes in both Nude Beige for fair complexions and Nude Tan for darker skins and is the ultimate quick fix solution for any skin type.

With no oily finish and a quick, easy application, this moisturiser with added sun protection is perfect for every skin type.

For added SPF, the Nude Mineral Cover gives the ultimate, airbrushed finish, naturally!

But think wider than just sun protection, think solutions to new skin symptoms that present themselves with the change of season.

A light-weight moisturiser in place of the heavier creams will stop unwanted congestion and breakouts.

MD Visage Sensitone, with light exfoliation and anti-aging benefits to boot, it's a summer miracle worker leaving skin younger and fresher than before.

Finally, oil up the summer season with soft, firm, stretch mark and scar-free skin with Nude Oil.

Listen, learn and engage with every customer in order to find the "sensible solution" for them.



Support for patient needs

MEDICINES Australia has come out in defence of patient support programs, in the wake of the controversy over Pfizer's program, saying that they play a key role in supporting the quality use of medicines in the community as well as ensuring improved patient health outcomes.

"For years, government and other health sector stakeholders have been saying medicines companies should do more to promote the quality use of medicines to patients," said Medicines Australia chief executive Dr Brendan Shaw.

"These patient support programs respond to those calls," he added.

Whilst not specifically singling out Pfizer's patient support plan, but rather speaking in generalities about the current drug support programs on offer to Australian patients, Shaw said that the programs are ethically run and complement, rather than replace,

the roles played by doctors and pharmacists.

"Patient support programs are not designed to increase sales," he said.

"They are designed to drive better health outcomes," he added.

Shaw also defended fees paid to pharmacists and doctors for enrolling patients in the programs, saying "it's entirely reasonable that they should be remunerated in a way that's commensurate with the work undertaken".

"Consumers value these programs because they provide information at precisely the time when consumers want to take greater control of their health," he said.

"Programs that help patients understand their condition and better manage their health, or encourage adherence to the medicines they have been prescribed, can be extremely helpful," he added.

WIN AN EMU SPIRIT PACK



This week **Pharmacy Daily** is giving 10 lucky readers the chance to win an Emu Spirit Pamper Bundle, courtesy of **Emu Spirit**.

Our Pamper Bundle is

the perfect combination for those who cherish their skin.

Each bundle is valued at over \$110 and contains: 1 x Moisturising soap bar, 1 x 100g Day Crème Refresh and Renew, 1 x 100 g Night Crème Repair and Restore and 1 x 125ml Oil of Emu.

Emu Spirit is an Australian company dedicated to producing Emu oil that is simply and naturally the best quality available. Emu Spirit's Oil of Emu is a natural anti-inflammatory that can be used to treat all aches and pains to skin conditions such as psoriasis and eczema. Best of all, Oil of Emu can also be used to promote general health and wellbeing and is a wonderful source of 'skin food' to assist dry itchy skin, scars, and fine lines.

For your chance to win an Emu Spirit Pamper Bundle, simply be one of the first two people to send in the correct answer to the question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

How much does the Aches and Pains Introductory Pack cost?

Hint! Visit Emu Spirit website at: www.emuspirit.com

DISPENSARY CORNER

DEDICATED or detrimental?

A personal trainer in the US has embarked on a publicity program to help him better understand his overweight clients.

The trainer, Drew Manning, has spent the last six months eating nothing but fatty, sugary foods and not exercising in a bid to gain weight because he was sick of clients telling him that he didn't understand what it was like to be fat and have cravings.

"It was fun at first to eat whatever I wanted, but the ramifications and how my body feels is definitely not fun," he said.

Manning who gained 31.75kg of weight during his non-stop food fest, now plans to document his six month battle to get back into shape on his blog: <http://bellyvolver.blogspot.com/>.

Manning's road to weight loss starts on 05 November, and he says it will be "more diet than exercise".

IS it cheating?

A Lego robot has beaten the record for solving a Rubik's Cube puzzle, matching all colours in just 5.352 seconds.

According to reports the robot, aptly named CubeStormer II, does not look at the cube first like it's human counterparts but rather solves it as it goes, with the aid of a mobile phone camera.

The key to the CubeStormer II's success is that it analyses the images snapped by the camera to determine the patterns needed to solve the puzzle, and then sends the instructions to its arms which rotate the cube's blocks at high speeds.

Surprisingly the CubeStormer II only just beat out its nearest competitor, Fleiks Zemdegis, who was the previous Rubik's Cube record holder, and who previously solved the puzzle in just 5.66 seconds, without the help of a mobile phone.

For pharmacies looking for more personalised service...

Talk to BOQ Penrith today!

At BOQ Penrith, we're available to talk to pharmacists at the Landmark and Reform Conference: Penrith Panthers, Mulgoa Road on Saturday 29th October 2011 from 8.30am to 5.30pm.

- BOQ offers borrowings against existing pharmacies up to 80% of the Bank's going concern panel valuation (including stock). Where a refurbishment or renovation is involved we offer borrowings up to 70% against the uplift value in the pharmacy going concern Bank panel valuation (including stock).
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