

## PD readers discount

ELSEVIER Australia is offering a 15% discount off its *Community Pharmacy 2e* guide.

The guide, fully revised and in its second edition, is designed to aid pharmacists with symptom diagnosis, see **p3** for details.



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## Omega-3 for healthy hearts

**RESEARCHERS** at the University of Sydney have found that omega-3 fatty acids may reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke in adults who were small at birth.

The term 'small at birth' applies to the lowest 10% of birth weights of babies born nationwide.

"People who were small at birth, have an increased risk of cardiovascular disease," said Dr Michael Skilton, lead author of the paper, from the University's Boden

Institute of Obesity, Nutrition, Exercise & Eating Disorders.

"The greater degree of risk is partly due to the development, from early childhood, of arterial wall thickening which is an indicator of early atherosclerosis, leading to a build-up of fat and plaque, and hardening of the blood vessels," he added.

The study, published in *Pediatrics*, looked at 616 children born at term and broke them up into two groups, the first of which received a 500mg daily fish oil supplement from the start of bottle-feeding or six months of age until five years of age.

This group was also given canola-based margarines and cooking oil for the same period.

The second group was given a 500mg daily sunflower oil supplement as well as omega-6 fatty acid-rich margarines and cooking oil from the start of bottle-feeding or from 6 months of age until 5 years of age.

Researchers followed up the children when they turned eight, testing for the presence of arterial wall thickening and found that children receiving the sunflower supplement had thicker arterial walls if they were small at birth.

This thickening was not found in children who received the omega-3 supplement.

"The results of the paper suggest that babies born small may benefit from a daily omega-3 supplement, however further studies are required to confirm this," the researchers said.

## FeelGood Guide closes

**FEELGOOD** Guide closed for good yesterday, citing delays to online projects and lack of funding as the reasons for the business' collapse.

"FeelGood Guide management had, in vain, looked to secure a channel (group) partner capable of integrating its system within one of its member groups," said company CEO Peter Lusted.

"A channel agreement would have delivered scale – a vital element in delivering services, plan-o-grams, supplier involvement and field support," he added.

Lusted went on to thank all FeelGood Guide customers that have supported the system as well as the company's hard working team, "especially the absolute and unwavering dedication of Hilary Kahn who has been an inspiration to many individuals within the company and throughout the industry".

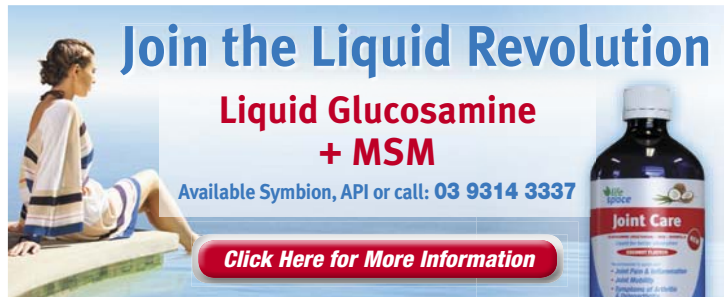
The company has said it will be contacting customers over the coming days.

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## Free flu vaccine shots

**ATTENDEES** at the Guild Pharmacy Academy NSW Convention at the Novotel Manly Pacific this weekend will receive free flu vaccine shots, courtesy of associate sponsor, Sanofi Pasteur.

**CLICK HERE** for details.

## WIN AN INNOXA PRIZE PACK



PD has teamed up with **Innoxia** this week and is giving five lucky readers the chance to win a prize pack, which includes an Innoxia Nail Polish Plush Velvet and an Innoxia Classic Colour Lipstick in Dewberry (pictured to the left).



Innoxia's NEW Classic Colour Lipstick range is inspired by beautiful, wearable, everyday shades for a smooth natural looking pout.

The NEW Innoxia Nail Polishes boast a quick to dry and long lasting formula that is formaldehyde free.

To win, simply be the first person to send through the correct answer to the question below to: [comp@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:comp@pharmacydaily.com.au)

### What is the Innoxia tagline?

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Juliana Kobryn** from **Blooms the Chemist Springwood**.



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## Guild Update

### This week's update from the Pharmacy Guild

#### PBS Growth

The Medicines Partnership of Australia (of which the Pharmacy Guild is a member) says PBS growth is running at a completely acceptable rate, and continues to provide huge health benefits for the nation.

As the medicines industry moves through a time of significant change, pricing and policy predictability will be paramount for the sector.

The latest analysis of the PBS expenditure undertaken by the partnership, using Medicare Australia data, shows that growth in government expenditure on the PBS last year was 2.4%.

Given the inflation rate last year was 3.1%, it suggests that government spending on the PBS in 2011 actually fell in real terms, and is below the government's own growth target of 2% in real terms.

Over the last decade, PBS expenditure as a proportion of GDP has remained steady at between 0.6% and 0.65%.

The Australian Government's 2010 Intergenerational Report predicted that PBS expenditure would be 0.7% of GDP through to 2020.

Already, actual expenditure in 2009-10 and 2010-11 have both come in below those forecasts.

The PBS actually represents the most cost-effective element of health expenditure, and should not be subjected to further savings measures which could threaten the best subsidised medicines scheme in the world.

While the medicines sector is under pressure, it achieved exports of \$3.7 billion in 2011 – more than the car industry and wine industry.



The Pharmacy  
Guild of Australia

## Generics could save millions

AUSTRALIA pays significantly more for generics and prescribes proportionally less of them than other countries, according to a recent article published in the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

Written by Professor Philip Clarke of the Centre for Health Policy, Programs and Economics at the University of Melbourne, the article argued that Australia could save hundreds of millions of dollars in PBS subsidies if generic drugs were prescribed more often and the system of their pricing was improved.

Speaking in the wake of the article, Kate Lynch, CEO of the Generic Medicines Industry Association (GMiA), said "every time a consumer chooses a follow-on generic medicine, there are substantial benefits to national savings".

"Across the pharmacy counter, follow-on generics cost the same as the original branded medicine.

"Therefore, the patient is not being incentivised to opt for the generic follow-on.

Lynch quantified her statements by saying that "this not up to individual community pharmacists but related to the absence of a Government price signal to

patients".

"We believe patients should be financially rewarded for opting for a generic medicine which is exactly the same in quality as a branded version yet a much better bet for the economy," she said.

According to GMiA, only 36% of all prescriptions in Australia are for follow on generic medicines, compared to 78% in the US.

"This is because in the U.S., patients are far more sensitive to the price of medicines," GMiA said.

MEANWHILE, GMiA also said that if the government does not act soon to sure up the sustainability of the generic medicines sector, that Australians could in the future, be facing similar drug shortages that are currently hitting American cancer patients.

"We need to ensure further cuts to the PBS are avoided," said Lynch.

"Pharmaceuticals are Australia's leading export of elaborately transformed goods.

"Yet our role in returning hundreds of millions of dollars to the economy is barely recognised," she added.

Lynch also argued that Australian policy makers need to ensure patients have greater access to high quality, affordable follow-on generic medicines.

"If these policy levers were put in place in this year's Budget, we know it will be a three way-win for the patient, the taxpayer and the economy," she added.

### PD Plunkett winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Anne Van Heel of Glenhaven MediAdvice Pharmacy who was the lucky winner of last Friday's Plunkett Pharmaceuticals' NS-8 Competition.



## DISPENSARY CORNER

### PRENANT cravings.

Some pregnant women crave chocolate and chips together whilst others crave anchovies and vegemite on toast, but one British mother-to-be is challenging for the weirdest pregnancy craving of them all, newspaper.

According to reports the 35-year old Ann Curran's newspaper of choice is the *Dundee Evening Telegraph* which she says has the "right flavour".

Not satisfied to just snack at home, Curran says she likes to shred sections of the *Dundee Tele* and store them in her handbag so that she can have a tasty treat when on the go.

"If you shredded up lots of different bits of paper, I would know exactly which one was the *Evening Telegraph*," she said.

"My pals keep papers for me but I have to buy a couple of extras to get me through the weekend," she added.

### BEAR Grylls eat your heart out.

A 44-year old Swedish man has been discovered alive after months trapped in a snowdrift in his car.

The man was discovered by snowmobile riders just off a forest track, after two months of being stuck in his car under the snow in temperatures which dropped as low as -30°C.

According to reports the man survived by eating handfuls of snow and bunking down covered by a sleeping blanket which was fortuitously in his car at the time it got stuck.

Experts say the cold may have slowed down the man's metabolism, placing him in a sort of hibernative state, whilst the warm clothing he was wearing combined with the warm air in the car created an igloo effect which held off the worst effects of the below zero temperatures.

Although having lost considerable amounts of weight, the man is said to be recovering well in hospital.

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## COMMUNITY PHARMACY 2e

symptoms, diagnosis and treatment

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND EDITION

**Dr Paul Rutter**, BPharm, MRPharmS, PhD

Principal Lecturer, School of Pharmacy, University of Wolverhampton, UK

**Dr David Newby**, BPharm, PhD

Faculty of Health, University of Newcastle, NSW, Australia

Fully revised and now in its second edition, *Community Pharmacy 2e* provides a guide to the differential diagnosis of symptoms commonly seen by community pharmacists throughout Australia and New Zealand.

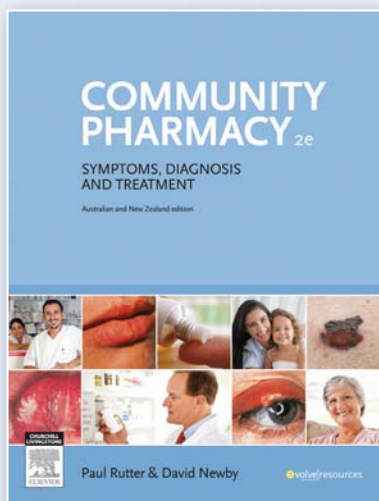
More than 12 new treatment medicines have been added to this new edition, along with eight new case studies.

All conditions, products and recommendations have been revised to reflect current local drug scheduling and clinical practice.

The book's evidence base has been updated in line with sources including the National Prescribing Service, Australian Prescriber, Australian Medicines Handbook, the Therapeutic Guidelines and Pharmaceutical Society of Australia guidelines.

Evidence-based practice has been incorporated into every chapter, and addresses current issues like alternative treatments and complementary therapies, weight loss products and pre-quit nicotine use.

Additional web-based resources include images for dermatology and ophthalmology, case studies and a chapter on *Evidence-Based Practice*.



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