

TB and children

MOST cases of tuberculosis remain undiagnosed since the standard testing procedure is not effective in children, according to Dr Marais, a paediatrician based at the Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Maris, an Associate Professor at the University of Sydney, whose *Tuberculosis in Children* article is featured in the latest issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine*, is urging health workers to get trained to recognise children at risk of TB, and "to promote better prevention strategies and make sure that adequate diagnosis and treatment is readily accessible."

"Many doctors think children don't get TB," said Dr Marais.

"They do, in fact young children are exceptionally vulnerable because of their underdeveloped immune systems," he added.

Australia does not have high rates of TB in its adult and child population, however Maris argues that it remains an important health issue for Australia given our regional proximity to heavily affected nations.

"High disease rates in countries such as Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Vietnam, China and India are complicated by a growing incidence of drug resistant strains," he said.

"The majority of children diagnosed with TB in the clinics at Westmead are from immigrant families, but indications are that about one third of children get infected locally, suggesting on-going TB transmission within communities," he added.

Pharmacy testing debate

AUSTRALIA needs to cast the net wider beyond the GPs office to reach patients with undiagnosed modifiable health risk factors, according to the Director of the Baker IDI Diabetes and Heart Institute, Professor Garry Jennings.

The comments come as part of an article written by Jennings in *MJA Insight*, where he argues the case for and against pharmacy screening.

In the plus column, Jennings cited a blood-pressure and cholesterol campaign run in Portuguese pharmacies, which found that nearly half of all people who got their blood pressure and cholesterol checked in pharmacies were at risk of having a fatal cardiovascular event.

Other positives include the fact that pharmacists are trusted by the Australian public and their presence is widespread.

"Pharmacists are trusted as a reliable source of health information," Jennings wrote.

"They are trained in health and disease, arguably underutilised and capable of doing far more than labelling medication boxes," he added.

On the flip side, Jennings said blood pressure testing requires a "quiet and familiar environment", and that public screening often attracts the "worried well" who may clog up the queue, slowing the system from identifying those who are actually at risk.

In addition Jennings said that because pharmacy screening does not offer an immediate solution for

those identified as at risk, and instead refers them on to their doctor, it may be virtually useless.

"Risk screening without risk reduction can be worse than none at all," he wrote.

Finally Jennings said pharmacists would need to also avoid recommending remedies that have no evidence base.

Despite the negatives, Jennings did conclude that pharmacy testing is worth a trial.

MEANWHILE the article has been labelled as a "well balanced assessment of the value of pharmacies as places for well person screening for hidden chronic disease states" by pharmacy consultant Rollo Manning.

A trial, according to Manning "would be the opportunity to leverage a change in the way pharmacies are utilized by government to deliver health services through the establishment of a PharmaCare Agency that is accredited to provide such services and receives a fee for doing it".

Rollo goes further, arguing that "the present process of granting an Approval Number to every pharmacy that was in business in 1990 with no follow up on efficiency, effectiveness or intent to improve health outcomes has made a mockery of the 'approval' process".

All pharmacies, according to Rollo, should have to apply for an 'Approval' that would require them to provide a certain range of services for which they would be paid an amount determined by an independent agency such as PharmaCare.

"The holder of the approved Agency would be required to have studied an additional range of subjects and have obtained some post graduate qualification in order to safely carry out the new responsibilities that are on offer with a PharmaCare Approval," he said.

"The days of dispensing PBS as a right must go and responsibility to carry out health promoting functions put in its place," he added.

Events Calendar

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* Continuing Professional Development Calendar, featuring upcoming events and opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

28-29 July: PSA Tasmanian Clinical and Business Seminar, Mecure Hotel Hobart, lorraine.norris@psa.org.au.

01 Aug: Pharmacy Guild of Australia Qld Branch Primary Healthcare Evening Course, Brisbane, email cpd.training@qldguild.org.au.

02 Aug: Medicines Update 2012: Parkville Thursday series @ Lecture Theatre 1, Monash University Parkville Campus, 7.30pm-9.30pm, www.psa.org.au.

07 Aug: Guild Business MasterClass: Retail Solutions for Pharmacy, 9am-4.30pm, St Leonards, NSW guild.clinical@nsw.guild.org.au.

08 Aug: Pharmacy financial health, Matthew Harris - Crowne Plaza Surfers Paradise. Details 07 3831 3788.

11-15 Aug: Medici Capital Pharmacy Snow Business Mt Buller - www.medici.com.au.

25-26 Aug: PSA Adventure Education Weekend, Stewarts Bay Lodhe, Port Arthur - lorraine.norris@psa.org.au.

03-05 Sep: Essential Pharmacy Financial Management 3-day Workshop, Sydney, fmrcbusdev.com.au/pharmacy-2

13-16 Sep: Pharmacy Business Network, National Convention Centre Canberra, pharmacybusinessnetwork.com.

02-06 Oct: Pharmacy Guild of Australia Offshore Conference 2012, Waikiki, Hawaii - pgahawaii2012@arinex.com.au.

19-21 Oct: PSA Pharmacy Australia Congress, Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre - www.psa.org.au/pac.

01-04 Nov: SHPA 38th annual conference - Medicines Management 2012, Canberra - mm2012shpa.com.

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Bone Regeneration

THE University of Sydney is hosting a tissue Engineering Symposium, titled "Programming Stem Cells for Bone, Blood, and Cartilage Regeneration: current state and future prospective" between 27-29 August.

For more information **CLICK HERE**.

Breastfeeding opinions

FORTY percent of women prefer to breastfeed in a mother's room rather than in public, according to an online survey by Philips AVENT.

The survey also revealed that over a third of women plan to or actually breastfed their baby for a 6-12 month period, while over a quarter breastfed for 0-6 months.

In response to the question of why breastfeeding is important to them, over three quarters of women said they believe that breast milk is better for their baby's health.

A new drug hope for MS

A NEW class of drug treatment for the treatment of multiple sclerosis is about to go into clinical trials after a decade of investigation by Ray Norton of the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences and his colleagues.

The treatment is derived from a component of the venom taken from the tentacles of the Caribbean sea anemone.

Called ShK, this venom component, according to Norton's research, has been found to block the Kv1.3 potassium channel located in white blood cells, which produces nerve damage in MS patients.

Following this discovery, Norton collaborated with a team of US scientists to investigate potassium channels as targets for the development of novel immunosuppressive agents.

Together, the researchers were able to develop a highly selective immune suppressant derived from

the sea anemone peptide.

According to Professor Norton in blocking the potassium channels, ShK prevents the white blood cells from attacking the nervous system and causing the paralysis observed in MS patients.

"This research shows that we may be able to effectively treat the disease while protecting the immune system," Norton said.

"Continuously blocking these T-cell channels with ShK should prevent further nerve damage, even after the initial onset of symptoms, including paralysis.

"If the clinical trials are successful, this could prove an effective treatment for MS," he added

NZ services agreement

ALL community pharmacies in New Zealand have signed the new Pharmacy Services Agreement (an agreement between pharmacy owners and their local District Health Board).

The Agreement has been consulted on with the District Health Boards (DHBs) and sector agents, including the Guild, over the last 18 months and according to the NZ Pharmacy Guild, holds the biggest change in services and funding the profession has had in over 50 years.

According to the NZ Guild the new Agreement rewards pharmacists for providing support and advice so patients can better manage their medicines and medical conditions.

"As a membership organisation representing community pharmacy owners, we are very pleased that all of our 675 members have signed the PSA," said the Guild's Executive Chair, Karen Crisp.

"Pharmacists currently provide many services for their patients that will be better recognised under the new Agreement," Crisp added.

The three year transitional PSA period for community pharmacy began on 01 July this year, with the agreement intended to move pharmacy from being paid solely by a medicine dispensing fee, to a patient-focused payment model.



DISPENSARY CORNER

MAN sized problems.

OXY Skincare is vying for the title of 'most disgusting ad', having cobbled together YouTube clips of males squeezing pimples to create an ad for its OXY skincare range.

"We know that young guys like watching people squeeze big pimples," said Debra Smith, Marketing Manager at Mentholatum (makers of OXY).

"While some of the vision in the video is unsavoury, it highlights the problems that many acne sufferers go through.

"Most of our audience don't believe that the people currently appearing in advertisements for pimple cream have ever had acne.

So why would they believe their pimple cream works?"

It was really important to OXY to reach out to its customers with a bold and real message," she added.

To view the clip **CLICK HERE**.

NEVER mind the anabolics.

A new beer has hit the market in the lead-up to the Olympic Games titled 'Never Mind the Anabolics'.

A jab at performance enhancing drugs used by sporting cheats, the beer contains eight substances which athletes at the Olympics are banned from taking, including: creatine, guarana, lycii berries, kola nut, Gingko, matcha tea, maca powder and steroids.

The beer has been released only for a limited edition run, and according to its makers, the Scottish brewery BrewDog, is designed to "undermine global sponsorship" for the Olympics.

"It seems a beer laced with performance enhancing ingredients isn't actually illegal, but it is definitely frowned upon," BrewDog's James Watt said.

"It is a thorn in the side of the biggest corporate beast spawned this century.

"This is the craft beer community showing the sponsors of the games the finger in the best way we know how," he added.

WIN DAVID BABAII'S HAIR PRODUCTS



Every day this week, **Pharmacy Daily** has given one lucky reader the chance to win a prize pack inclusive of **David Babaii's** hair products, valued at \$70.

Most ordinary hair care systems use harsh sulphates that strip the hair causing dryness, frizziness, dullness and colour fade. However, the David Babaii hair range works in harmony to

nourish and protect the hair, locking in natural oils with intensive ingredients. The David Babaii range is free from sulphates, parabens and petrochemicals. David Babaii is proud to introduce Miracle Volume, an instant hair volumising powder which is the latest addition to the David Babaii range.

For your chance to win this great prize pack, simply be the first person to send through the correct answer to the question below.

Name two of David Babaii's celebrity clientele?

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

Hint! Visit www.davidbabaii.com

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Nerenda Cheng** from **Chemist Warehouse Springvale**