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Natazia approval

THE US Food and Drug Authority has approved a new indication for Natazia (estradiol valerate and estradiol valerate/dienogest), for the treatment of heavy menstrual bleeding that is not caused by any diagnosed conditions of the uterus, in women who choose an oral contraceptive for contraception.

See www.fda.gov for details.

Obesity and cancer

DIETARY and other modifiable risk factors may account for as many as 90% of colorectal cancers, according to The American College of Gastroenterology (ACG).

The comments are part of efforts by the ACG, in conjunction with the Campaign to End Obesity, to educate US citizens about the scientific evidence linking obesity to an increased colorectal cancer risk, as the prevalence of obesity in America continues to rise.

"Recent studies suggest that about one-quarter of colorectal cancer cases could be avoided by following a healthy lifestyle," said ACG President, Dr Lawrence Schiller.

Adding its voice to the efforts, the Campaign to End Obesity said that with two-thirds of American adults being overweight or obese, it is essential people understand their long-term health risks.

"Screening is one of the most powerful weapons at-hand for preventing colorectal cancer and obesity," said Stephanie Silverman, co-founder of the Campaign to End Obesity.

"Education around these issues is of utmost importance," she added.

Complementary reform

THE listing of evaluated registered complementary medicines (CMs) on the TGA website is just the "first step" in a much-needed reform of the sector, according to the Australian Self-Medication Industry.

Speaking in the wake of the public release of the list of AUST R (Registered) CMs (*PD* yesterday), Executive Director of ASMI, Dr Deon Schoombie, said that other measures are now needed to sure-up public confidence in the use of evidence-based CMs.

"It is pleasing that we have greater transparency, and that consumers are now aware of products which have been fully evaluated for quality, safety and efficacy," Schoombie said.

"However, reform is also needed to address the lack of data protection on the evidence required to support applications for registration," Schoombie added.

ASMI also called for the implementation of data protection measures which would encourage research that will in turn help to generate more evidence necessary to build confidence and rigour in the CM sector.

The implementation of the remaining industry reforms from the Expert Committee on Complementary Medicines in the Health System, including increased post-market surveillance, together with penalties and sanctions as deterrents against non-compliance, is also a priority, ASMI said.

"Unfortunately, the publication of this list by the TGA does nothing to shift us to where we need to be

with respect to strengthening the regulatory framework for "listed" CMs, given that the vast majority of CMs are listed products," said Schoombie.

"This system requires genuine reform, where consumers have adequate information about evidence and health claims for medicines, and where the degree of regulation is commensurate with the risk posed by the medicines," Schoombie added.

Aussies missing sleep

NINETY-two percent of Australians admit to having a bad night's sleep at least one to two nights per week, according to a new Snooze Poll.

The survey looked at responses from 1,000 Australians and found that 40% of Aussies live with six hours or less of sleep per night, with power naps at lunchtime and stimulant beverages named as the most popular ways to stave off daytime fatigue.

Discussing their main problems associated with sleep, 54% of respondents said waking up still feeling tired was their main concern, whilst 42% said staying asleep was their issue, 32% named struggling to get to sleep as their problem and 28% saying they simply wake up too early.

The survey coincides with the launch of Bayer's new sleep formula Prosomnia, and is supported by a website which features a sleep test, as well as tips to improve sleep ([CLICK HERE](#)).

Free PSA memberships

THE Northern Territory's Charles Darwin University is paying for all its pharmacy students to become members of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia.

The free membership decision has been described by the Dean of Charles Darwin University, Dr Yean Yeow Tan, as an extension of students' educational and professional development.

"We feel PSA has much to offer to complement what we are doing at the CDU Pharmacy School and so it is a natural fit for our students to be members of the Society," he said.

"The students will grow professionally and have access to the Society's broad range of educational and professional development tools," he added.

The move coincides with the NT PSA's first Pharmacy Student of the Year competition.

Watson's patent issue

WATSON Laboratories is seeking US FDA approval to market nebivolol hydrochloride tablets, 2.5mg, 5mg, 10mg and 20mg, a generic version of Forest Laboratories' Bystolic (a beta-adrenergic blocking agent that is approved for the treatment of hypertension).

Its application is being contested by Forest, who has filed a suit which seeks to stop Watson from commercialising its generic before the expiry of the drug's patent.

The commencement of the law suit has resulted in a stay of final FDA approval until 17 June 2015, or until final resolution of the matter before the court.

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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.

18 Mar: Pain and Addiction Seminar 'The Pharmacist's Role in Practice, Persistence, Nerves and Care'; 8.45am - 4.30pm; 3 William Street, Longford Tasmania - lorraine.norris@psa.org.au.

19 Mar: The One Minute Counsellor 2012- Old Drugs, New Drugs and Interventions; 7.30pm - 9.30pm; Conference Room 2, Monash University Rural Health - call Mark Henning 5174 2214.

Infectious diseases

THE Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases Annual Scientific Meeting is coming to Fremantle this month, between 21-25 March.

The forum will address: emerging infectious diseases in Australia-effects of climate change and threats to public health; tools to predict, diagnose, manage and monitor infections; antimicrobial use and abuse; multi-resistant organisms in the community; and the latest research on specific diseases incl malaria, dengue, hendra, rotavirus, influenza, viral hepatitis and tuberculosis.

See www.asid.net.au/Annual-Scientific-Meeting.

Brissie, have your say

THE Australian Pharmacy Council is reminding Qld that registration for the upcoming public workshop covering the Accreditation Standards for Pharmacy Degree Programs review, closes on 18 March.

The workshop will take place on 22 Mar from 9am to 4.30pm.

See www.pharmacycouncil.org.au.

The future of pharmacy?

ESTABLISHING a PharmCare agency that will handle Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme outlays in accordance with tasks done, is set to be a controversial topic at the upcoming 9th Annual Future of the PBS Forum next month.

Speaking ahead of his presentation Rollo Manning, NT pharmacist and pharmacy consultant, said that a PharmCare agency would "stop this ridiculous notion that the country owes pharmacists a sustainable future when if half of them closed no one would miss them – the clients would just go to the next nearest one which in most cases is within 100 metres".

Backing up his position, Rollo said that "there have been too many pharmacies for too long enjoying the huge benefits of discounting on generics and this has kept them afloat.

"Let's face it – pharmacy and the PBS are part of a health system and should NOT be viewed as a small business support mechanism," he added.

Pharmacists, according to Rollo, must be forced to realign with

primary health care and "stop being retail merchandisers".

"Each Approved Pharmacy should be required by contract (and threat of losing it) to undertake accreditation as a medicines management expert and provide consumers with an upfront range of clinical services that are adequately reimbursed," he said.

"The trouble now is that the remuneration on offer from the 5CPA clinical programs has to be spread across 4,700 outlets – who said the country needed so many?," he added.

Rollo went on to recommend that the Guild champion a realignment plan with half the number of approved pharmacies, which dishes double the throughput for those left, and which requires a contract with the PBS to do certain tasks in return for the dispensing fee.

"\$6.42 for a few keystrokes and a label on a repeat is fanciful with the same fee for a person with a chronic illness for first time dispensing and in need of counselling," he said.

For more information on the Forum **CLICK HERE**.



DISPENSARY CORNER

LIFE after death.

An 89 year old American man, Fred Guentert, has very definite plans about where he wants to end up after he shifts off this mortal coil, in an Egyptian sarcophagus.

So great is Guentert's love for Egyptology, that he has spent the last 25 years lovingly crafting a 7-foot sarcophagus out of pine wood, and adorning it with Egyptian royal colours and figures.

Guentert attributes his Egyptian passion to having been born the year Carter discovered King Tut's tomb, saying "it was fate and it's given me a lifelong fascination".

Caesars and obesity?

PROFESSOR Erika Isolauri from the University of Turku in Finland has traveled to our shores to reveal research which shows caesarean born babies may have a higher risk of allergies and obesity later in life.

Keynote speaker at a joint Perinatal Society of Australia-NZ and Federation of Asian and Oceania Perinatal Societies Congress, Professor Isolauri said infants delivered vaginally receive protective bacteria during delivery, helping to colonise and protect the infant's gut.

"The good bacteria that babies pick up during the natural birth process play an important role in reducing an infant's risk of becoming overweight or obese in their early years of life," she said.

"Following a vaginal or caesarean birth, breastfeeding is the best way to provide infants with these beneficial bacteria, known as probiotics," she added.

Isolauri backed up her statement saying that research suggests that breastfed infants are up to 22 per cent less likely to be overweight or obese in childhood.

"Whether a baby is born vaginally or by caesarean, I encourage all Australian parents to consider a nutritional source that provides the essential probiotics for a healthy immune system," she added.

WIN YOU ME & EVERYBODY PACK



This week we are giving five lucky readers the chance to win a **You Me & Everybody** prize pack.

You Me & Everybody is a new skin care range designed for women who

love their skin, because guess what? We love it too!

Each prize pack is worth \$120 and includes Saving Face Mist Toner, Saving Face Serum, Saving Face Anti-Aging Moisturiser, Shady Lady Daily Face Milk, Derma Karma Arnica Cream, Cool It Aloe Vera Gel, Helping Hands Wash and Sumptuous Skin Mousse!

To win, simply be the first person to send the correct answer to the daily question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

Who is the You Me & Everybody Helping Hands Hand Wash perfect for?

Hint! Visit www.youmeandeverybody.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's lucky winner, **Anna Michael** from **APHS Pharmacy Greenslopes**.