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## Fish oil controversy

**ONLY** three out of 32 fish oil supplements marketed in New Zealand have been found to contain eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) at equal or higher than labelled levels of content, according to a recent study out of Auckland and Newcastle universities and published in *Scientific Reports*.

Only 8% met the international standards of maximum oxidation markers, the authors said.

Australian Self Medication Industry (ASMI) director of regulatory and scientific affairs Steve Scarff said it was important to note that this was a study of New Zealand products, not Australian.

"In fact, two recent studies of fish oil products available in Australia, one of them conducted by the CSIRO, actually found close agreement between the ingredients listed on the label of the products they tested and the actual composition of those products."

**CLICK HERE** to access the study.

## Biosimilar naming

**THE** previously proposed naming convention for biosimilars will not continue within the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) due to international developments in the area, the TGA has said.

The convention to be used while the convention is under review will be 'Tradename' generic name.

**CLICK HERE** for more.

## Grattan: wider phmcy services

**PHARMACISTS** could work with GPs to issue repeat prescriptions in order to reduce visits to general practitioners, Grattan Institute (GI) Health Program director Stephen Duckett has said.

Writing in *The Conversation*, Duckett said the primary care reform debate had got off on the wrong foot, and Medicare reform must instead focus on increasing value, "not just cutting costs."

"This means changing how things are done and what gets done, not just who pays for it."

Previous GI work had shown nearly 20% of GP visits were less complex, involving only one problem, and a significant proportion of these could be safely handled by other professionals.

Pharmacists had four years of

drug training and could safely dispense drugs and provide advice on medicines, Duckett said.

"Pharmacists in the United Kingdom, United States, Canada and New Zealand already deliver a wider range of primary care services and Australian pharmacists should follow suit."

This echoes Pharmacy Guild executive director David Quilty's recent call for extended pharmacist services including the issuing of repeat prescriptions for patients with stable, long term conditions such as diabetes.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.

## 'Ask your pharmacist' campaign impact

**INFREQUENT** pharmacy users were more likely to consider using a pharmacy for advice for a non-emergency illness or condition after seeing a commercial for the Pharmacy Guild's 'Discover More: Ask your pharmacist', research has shown.

Conducted by Jigsaw Research with a representative sample of 621 women aged 25 to 44, the online survey from October to December found 75% who used a pharmacy between two and six times a year were likely to consider using a pharmacy for advice on a non-emergency illness post research, compared with 63% pre research.

Recognition of the gold cross logo also increased from 44% to 54% over the commercial's airing period, the Guild said.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.

## FDA investigated Apotex Canada plant

**THE** US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) investigated an Apotex manufacturing facility in Brantford, Canada last year.

The *Toronto Star* reported that FDA investigators found the company had launched an internal review in 2013 to ensure equipment to produce medication was being effectively cleaned.

This was shelved until an effective procedure was developed, but in September 2014, multiple batches of medication were made using the same equipment, the *Star* reported.

Apotex said following a routine internal audit, and subsequent regulatory inspections by the FDA and Health Canada, several areas for improvement were identified.

"These observations did not in any way reflect the safety or effectiveness of our products."

"Using objective evidence and industry best practices, Apotex assessed each observation thoroughly and prepared a comprehensive, thoughtful action plan, which was submitted to the FDA on December 12th, 2014."

Apotex said it was confident its facilities and procedures met or surpassed industry standards.

## HIV stigma problems

**WHILE** the stigma associated with HIV is known to interfere with health care and adherence, new research published in *AIDS Care* has shown that concerns around treatment can also be an added source of stigma.

**CLICK HERE** to access the article.

## WIN WITH OMEGA PHARMA AUSTRALIA

This week **Pharmacy Daily** and **Omega Pharma Australia** are giving readers the chance to win a great prize pack including a BALANCED Intimate Daily Wash, the latest addition to the Omega Pharma portfolio. Winners will also receive an Audiotape Ear Cleansing Wash and a Silence Anti-snoring Spray.

Verona is a dermatologically & gynaecologically tested intimate wash range for everyday use. Its pH balanced formula is enriched with a blend of natural L-Lactic Acid and replenishing ingredients, helping to protect the natural microflora of a woman's intimate area, all day, every day, Omega Pharma says.

To win, be the first person from **TAS** and **VIC** to send the correct answer to the following question about Verona to: **comp@pharmacydaily.com.au**

**5. What are two daily factors that can disturb the natural balanced protective flora of the vaginal area?**

Need a hint? verona.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday's winner Jackie Carter from Australian Pharmacy Industries!



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### Jobs of the Week

- **Customer Care Pharmacist** - Coastal South, WA (Job# 2011014)  
Refurbished pharmacy set up specifically to accommodate new role.
- **Pharmacist Manager** - Goulburn Valley, VIC (Job# 2010860)  
Career opportunity within 100 kms of Melbourne - friendly community.
- **Pharmacist Part Time** - South Coast, NSW (Job# 2011051)  
Missing the stimulation of the dispensary? This is for you!

Love your work? ...SO DO RAVEN'S!

## Events Calendar

**WELCOME** to *Pharmacy Daily's* events calendar, opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you'd like us to feature, email [info@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:info@pharmacydaily.com.au).

**1 Feb:** Provide First Aid; Bankstown; see: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**1-4 Feb:** 22nd Australasian Clinical Pharmacy Educational Seminar: Therapeutic Update; St Kilda; see: [www.aacp.com.au](http://www.aacp.com.au)

**6-8 Feb:** Foundation Seminar in Clinical Pharmacy Practice; Melbourne; for more details visit: [www.cpd.shpa.org.au](http://www.cpd.shpa.org.au)

**14-16 Feb:** Pharmacy Re-Entry Course: Refresher Training for Australian Community Pharmacy; St Leonards; more details available at: [www.psa.org.au/conferences](http://www.psa.org.au/conferences)

**21 Feb:** Pharmacy in Focus: Bridging the Gap Workshop; Wagga Wagga; more details at: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**21-22 Feb:** Pharmacy in Focus: Cardiovascular Weekend; Wagga Wagga; for more details visit: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**22 Feb-1 Mar:** Pharmacy Study Tour; Deer Valley/Park City, USA, more info at [www.medic.com.au/events](http://www.medic.com.au/events)

**6-8 Mar:** Annual Therapeutic Update; Terrigal; for more details visit: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**7 Mar:** Better Pharmacy Futures Forum; Terrigal; more details at: [www.psa.org.au](http://www.psa.org.au)

**7-8 Mar:** Oncology - Foundation Seminar; Melbourne; see: [www.cpd.shpa.org.au](http://www.cpd.shpa.org.au)

**12-15 Mar:** Pharmacy Guild of Australia Annual National Conference APP 2015, Gold Coast - see [www.appconference.com](http://www.appconference.com)

## Paracetamol, ibuprofen combo

**RECKITT** Benckiser (RB) has launched a paracetamol and ibuprofen combination product, Nuromol with Synchro-Tech, available as pharmacist only, for acute pain.

At a media lunch, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Queensland clinical pharmacologist and rheumatologist, and RB consultant, Dr Paul Kubler presented on dental pain studies which showed the combination had a similar analgesia effect to Codeine combinations but better tolerability.

RB said it would release new training tools, including identifying S3 pain occasions, in the coming months.

## Orphan update

**FOMEPIZOLE** has been added to the list of designated orphan drugs on the Therapeutic Goods Administration website.

**CLICK HERE** to for more information.

## Bush pharmacy challenges

"**EDUCATIONAL**, confronting and inspiring", were Guild national president George Tambassis' choice of words to describe his four day tour of pharmacy services in remote Aboriginal communities in Western Australia this year (*PD* 09 Jan).

Visiting with his old university friend Andrew 'Robbo' Roberts at the FIP international pharmacy conference in Thailand last year, Tambassis arranged the trip to better understand the challenges of bush pharmacy.

As a result of the visit, the Guild was intent on looking for opportunities to assist Aboriginal health through rural and remote community pharmacies, Tambassis said.

**CLICK HERE** to read more.



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## Merck pulls Victrelis

**VICTRELIS** is being discontinued in the US "due to advances in treatment practices, and the consequent reduction in demand for Victrelis", a Merck and Co. spokesperson has told *The Wall Street Journal*.

Merck has notified the US Food and Drug Administration that the drug will no longer be available in the US by the end of this year although it will still be available in other countries.

## Orphan pricing query

**WITH** the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approving a record number of orphan drugs during 2014, the pricing of these treatments is set to come under increased scrutiny from regulators, according to a report by research and consulting GlobalData.

Usually high in cost, treatments for rare diseases comprise 17 of the 41 new molecular entities approved by the FDA last year.

With benefits to companies developing orphan drugs such as higher return on investment due to lower clinical trial costs and faster approval for trials, the trend toward orphan drug development made strategic sense for private enterprise, the report said.

## Pharmacist antibiotic education effective

**ANTIBIOTIC** use, including dispensing by pharmacists, could be improved through educational interventions, according to a review published in *BMC Public Health*.

Seventy eight studies were analysed for outcomes including adherence to guidelines, total antibiotics prescribed and quality of pharmacy practice related to antibiotics, with 62% in primary care and 78% in a hospital setting reporting positive results for all outcomes.

**CLICK HERE** to access the study.

## DISPENSARY CORNER

**CITIZEN science: *Drugs from Dirt*.** Inspired by the recent development of a new antibiotic from soil (*PD* 12 Jan), researchers at the Rockefeller University are wanting to source soil from every country in the world in the hope of finding new drugs.

The scientists have established a website *Drugs from Dirt*, through which anyone can sign up to send through samples of soil, especially from unique, unexplored environments such as caves, islands, and hot springs, the site suggests.

"By looking at samples from around we hope to identify new biosynthetic systems and from this discover new molecules," the site says, "BUT..... We need your help!"

To be part of the citizen science project, **CLICK HERE**.

## INTERGALACTIC pharmacy.

Thinking of moving pharmacies? How about to another galaxy?

Scientists from the International School for Advanced Studies in Trieste, Italy, have reportedly claimed it is mathematically possible for a worm hole to another galaxy to have been created by dark matter at the centre of the Milky Way.

Predicted by Einstein, worm holes have long been the fodder of the sci fi industry, but apparently, the scientists theorise that not only could one exist at the centre of the galaxy, it may be the size of the galaxy itself, and it may be possible to travel through it, the *Telegraph* reported.

The team say they're not claiming there definitely is a worm hole but rather that the hypothesis exists.

Time to invest in Virgin Galactic, then?

**CLICK HERE** to read more.