

Thursday 07 Jul 2016

PHARMACYDAILY.COM.AU

Pregnancy CM study

A **NEW** research project from Queensland's Griffith University aims to dispel myths around vitamin use for women before, during and after pregnancy.

The study, conducted by PhD candidate Janelle McAlpine, will survey several thousand women on what multivitamins they take, as well as their general health, diet and the influences on their choices of food and supplements.

"For women who give birth questions will also be asked on issues such as the birth weight of their baby and whether they laboured spontaneously.

"These are the sorts of things that we believe could be influenced by supplement usage but have never actually been thoroughly researched before," McAlpine said.

The research project can be accessed at mybodymybaby.com.au.

New AusPARs

THE TGA has published new Australian Public Assessment Reports for prescription medicines covering Strensiq (asfotase alfa) and Genvoya (elvitegravir/cobicistat/emtricitabine/tenofovir alafenamide [as fumarate]) - for details see www.tga.gov.au.

S8 Xanax has reduced AEs

RESTRICTING access to Xanax (alprazolam) by rescheduling it to S8 has had a significant impact on overall use of the medication in Australia, as well as resulting in fewer adverse events.

The TGA shifted alprazolam from Schedule 4 to Schedule 8 (PD 22 Jan 2014), with the move also prompting Pfizer to cease marketing the branded version of Xanax in Australia because it was no longer commercially viable.

Researchers from the University of NSW have found prescriptions for the medication declined 22% in the year since the rescheduling, with the results of their study

published in the *JAMA Internal Medicine* journal this week.

Dispensing of alprazolam fell 24%, and the study also found the rescheduling had cut the number of alprazolam related calls to the Poisons Information Centre by 50%.

The authors recommended further research on how the rescheduling has affected private alprazolam prescriptions, which are not captured by PBS data.

UK relocation blocked

AUTHORITIES in Britain have disallowed the relocation of a pharmacy in the city of Derby because of the potential impact on women seeking emergency contraception.

The request from Community Pharmacies (UK) Limited to move the Superdrug branch about 600m from a shopping centre to a GP surgery was denied by the National Health Service.

The pharmacy group took the matter to the UK High Court, but the judge ruled in favour of the NHS which said many of Superdrug's customers were young women accustomed to getting the morning after pill from the pharmacy.

King to Connect

PROFESSOR Stephen King, the chair of the Review of Pharmacy Remuneration and Regulation, will provide an update at the Pharmacy Connect conference in Sydney on the morning of Sat 10 Sep.

Conference convenor Kos Sclavos said King would highlight key themes arising from consultations on the long-awaited Review Discussion paper which is expected to be released later this month.

See pharmacyconnect.com.au.



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A&K Northern Lights

ABERCROMBIE & Kent has launched a *Northern Lights and Soul of the Arctic* journey as part of its 'Inspiring Expeditions by Geoffrey Kent' collection.

Kent, who is the founder of A&K will accompany the group of 20 on the exclusive tour between 25 Mar and 01 Apr 2017.

The trip starts in London with an evening at Windsor Castle before travelling by private jet into the Arctic Circle and staying at a remote wilderness lodge fitted with a private aurora observation dome for viewing the Northern Lights display.

The ultimate arctic adventure starts at US\$145,000 per person.

North to Alaska

CRUISEFIRST has launched a 17-night fly, stay, tour and cruise holiday in Alaska and the Rocky Mountains from \$4,299 per person twin share.

Departing 20 May 2017, guests will enjoy an eight-day coach tour of Western Canada and the Rocky Mountains taking in Banff, Kamloops and Whistler and Vancouver, before boarding *Celebrity Infinity* on 28 May for a seven-night cruise of Alaska and the Inside Passage.

See www.cruise1st.com.au.

Sigma diabetes referrals

AMCAL and Guardian pharmacies have referred as many as 100 patients to their GP after they underwent in-pharmacy HbA1c testing under a program launched by Sigma Pharmaceuticals in Mar.

The screening, which is now available in 32 Amcal and Guardian Pharmacies across Australia, builds on the brands' broad selection of point-of-care tests offered to patients.

Sigma has highlighted the diagnostic option as part of Diabetes Awareness Week (10-16 Jul), with an education campaign urging Australians to better understand diabetes.

Findings from an Amcal Consumer Health Barometer survey showed almost 40% of those with a family history of serious illness refuse to get tested - despite one person being diagnosed with diabetes across Australia every 5 minutes.

The research also revealed about half of the population had not heard of gestational diabetes, while one in ten respondents assumed you must be overweight to develop diabetes.

Sigma National Professional Services Manager, James Neville, said high visitation rates by at-risk

and already diagnosed patients to pharmacies provided multiple opportunities for intervention.

"We are committed to creating accessible healthcare solutions that facilitate patients accessing the most appropriate parts of the healthcare system in a more timely and efficient manner, and ultimately, motivate them to see their GP and better manage their health," he said.

Catalyst reporter out

THE ABC has suspended Maryann Demasi, the reporter who fronted the controversial 2013 *Catalyst* report on statins which caused a significant number of people with high cholesterol to stop taking their medication (*PD* 11 Dec 2013).

Demasi's on-air hiatus is related to another, more recent, report on the effects of electromagnetic radiation, which was also found to have violated editorial standards.

The statin reports were removed from the broadcaster's online platforms, while another *Catalyst* report by the same journalist on anti-depressants never made it to air after concerns were raised internally, reports *Media Watch*.



Dispensary Corner

THE world of competitive eating has now expanded from the traditional hot dogs and pies into something more wholesome.

This weekend nine semi-professional diners will gather in the New York city of Buffalo for "Kale Yeah - the World's Healthiest Eating Championship".

"For the first time in human history, the world's greatest eaters will test themselves against the ALMIGHTY KALE - the leafy green vegetable that has captured the hearts and minds of both the culinary set and those for whom their body is a temple," the promotional blurb recites.

"This battle of man vs woman vs kale promises to be the healthiest eating contest in the history of the world," it adds.

Contestants include "Crazy Legs" Conti, the World Buffet Eating Champion as well as World Watermelon Eating Champion Jim "Buffalo" Reeves.

AUSSIE police were no doubt bemused when they received a furious phone call from a man dobbing in his father for burning his cannabis plants.

The son was adamant his father's antics were an even greater crime than this possession of the illegal plants.

The duo who live in the regional Northern Territory town of Humpty Doo had reportedly been engaged in a dispute before the fire bug activity took place.

Police told local media neither man would face charges because the evidence had been destroyed.



WIN WITH CARMEX

This week Pharmacy Daily and Carmex are giving readers the chance to win a Carmex prize pack including a Click Stick, Jar, Tube, Moisture Plus in Sheer and Jasmine Green Tea, valued at \$31.95.

Carmex lip balms are an Australian favourite and are an essential part of any beauty routine. The range features SPF15 plus cooling and soothing properties that lips crave. Visit [FACEBOOK](https://www.facebook.com/carmex) for more information.

To win, be the first from SA or NT to send the correct answer to the following question to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

Is Carmex appropriate to use in the sun?

Congratulations to yesterday's winner, Jeanie Misko from Fiona Stanley Hospital.



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Part of the Business Publishing Group.

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