

NSAID warnings

OTC non-selective non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs will carry revised warnings under a proposal issued by the Therapeutic Goods Administration today.

The TGA has published a consultation document about proposed labelling requirements, expanding the warning statements to include the statement *Do not use for more than a few days at a time unless a doctor has told you to*.

The recommendation also tells consumers not to exceed the recommended dose, warns that excessive use can be harmful and urges them to see a doctor immediately if they get an allergic reaction to the drugs.

The move is the result of a TGA review report into the safety of ibuprofen, diclofenac, naproxen, flurbiprofen, ketoprofen and mefenamic acid.

Labelling changes are also being proposed for a wide range of other compounds including Vitamin A, selenium, black cohosh, seafood-derived glucosamine products, Royal Jelly and caffeine-containing herbs.

Primary makes its move

PRIMARY Health Care has finally outlined its intentions in the long-running Symbion takeover saga, announcing a \$4.10 per share all-cash offer for the company.

The offer values Symbion at about \$3.5 billion, with Primary CEO Ed Bateman saying he believes the bid is "clearly superior to the Healthscope Ltd Proposal".

There's a 90% minimum acceptance condition, with Primary saying the deal would be a "company transforming transaction to create one of Australia's leading integrated providers of healthcare services".

However a presentation to investors doesn't explain in detail what the fate of Symbion's pharmacy and consumer businesses would be under the takeover.

Two pages today

PHARMACY Daily today has two pages including our weekly Health, Beauty and New Products update - see p2.

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Alinta for PBS

ELI Lilly's Alinta drug for mesothelioma has been recommended for PBS listing.

Reports today say Health Minister Tony Abbott personally telephoned anti-asbestos campaigner Bernie Banton to advise him of the move, which comes after a sustained campaign led by Banton.

Obesity alert

LOCAL researchers have warned that Australia's hospital crisis will continue to deepen until health professionals better understand and begin to manage all the risk factors driving the current "epidemic" of heart disease and diabetes.

The alert comes in the light of a new global study "Shape of the Nations 2007" released by the World Heart Federation, which showed that GPs are neglecting to measure or treat the emerging cardiometabolic risk factors including abdominal obesity.

The sanofi-aventis backed study found that just 17% of GPs reported measuring waist circumference in patients.

Qld teeth talks

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Qld Branch) is holding a CPD session titled *Dental Topics in Pharmacy* including first aid, oral mucosa infections and injury, preventive measures and paediatric dental issues.

It's on next Tue 13 Nov at 7.30pm in the Russell Strong Auditorium, Princess Alexandra Hospital Brisbane and is free for PSA members - RSVPs to warrickd@psaqld.org.au.

November prescribing update

NEW INDICATIONS

Mometasone nasal spray

(Nasonex) is now also indicated for the symptomatic treatment of acute rhinosinusitis in patients ≥ 12 years without signs or symptoms of severe bacterial infection.

The usual recommended dose is two sprays (100 mcg) into each nostril twice daily. Nasonex is now also available in an alcohol-free formulation.

SAFETY-RELATED CHANGES

Pooled analysis of short-term studies of antidepressants (clomipramine, nortriptyline, trimipramine, imipramine, escitalopram) have shown an increased risk of suicidal thinking and behaviour, known as suicidality, in young adults aged 18 to 24 during initial treatment (generally the first 1-2 months).

These studies did not show an increase in the risk of

suicidality with antidepressants compared to placebo in adults beyond the age of 24 years. There was a reduction with antidepressants compared to placebo in adults aged 65 years or older.

- Severe neutropenia ($<0.5 \times 10^9/L$) has been uncommonly reported in **quetiapine** (Seroquel) clinical trials. Most cases of severe neutropenia have occurred within the first two months of starting therapy. There was no apparent dose relationship.

Possible risk factors for neutropenia include pre-existing low white cell count and history of drug-induced neutropenia. Quetiapine should be discontinued in patients with a neutrophil count $<1.0 \times 10^9/L$.

These patients should be observed for signs and symptoms of infection and neutrophil counts followed until they exceed $1.5 \times 10^9/L$.

- Metoprolol is contraindicated

in non-compensated congestive heart failure and in myocardial infarction patients with heart rate <45 beats/minute, P-R interval >0.24 seconds, systolic blood pressure <100 mmHg, and/or moderate to severe non-compensated heart failure.

- Contraindications for **cabergoline** (Cabaser) are extended to include patients with a history of pulmonary, pericardial or retroperitoneal fibrotic disorders.

It is also contraindicated in patients with anatomical evidence of cardiac valvulopathy of any valve (e.g. echocardiogram showing valve leaflet thickening, valve restriction, valve mixed restriction-stenosis).

Cabergoline should be discontinued if an echocardiogram reveals new or worsened valvular regurgitation, valvular restriction or valve leaflet thickening.

- Patients with pre-existing CNS

abnormalities, e.g. cerebral aneurysm and/or other vascular abnormalities such as vasculitis or pre-existing stroke, should not be treated with **methyphenidate** (Attenta).

Patients with additional risk factors (history of cardiovascular disease, concomitant medications that elevate blood pressure) should be assessed regularly for neurological/psychiatric signs and symptoms after initiating treatment.

- Contraindications for **ketoprofen gel** are extended to include pregnancy (3rd trimester) and use on skin conditions, e.g. eczema, acne, infected skin or open wounds.

PBS CHANGES

From 1 November, strontium ranelate (Protos) has an additional Streamlined Authority indication (2758): treatment as the sole PBS-subsidised anti-resorptive agent for osteoporosis in a woman aged 70 years

or older with a bone mineral density (BMD) T-score of -3.0 or less.

The date, site (femoral neck or lumbar spine) and score of the qualifying BMD measurement must be documented in the patient's medical records when treatment is initiated.

This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing always refer to the full Product Information.

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Back to basics for contacts

Advanced Medical Optics has released a new contact lens cleaning system which it says delivers superior microbial performance over a wide range of micro-organisms including fungi and acanthamoeba. The new COMPLETE MPS EASY RUB rinse and extended-soak routine removes more than 99.9999 percent of microbial contamination from contact lenses. It comes with a high quality starter kit and easy-to-follow patient brochure to improve compliance.

Stockist: Advanced Medical Optics
Tel: 1800 266 111

Summery space saver

As customers start to prepare for the holiday season, Manicare has released another summery version of its travel-sized containers in a cute floral bag. This will leave more room in your luggage for those extra dresses and heels! The travel set includes three airline-friendly cosmetic bottles with ID labels and two jars with spatula.

RRP: \$12.95

Stockist: McPherson's Consumer Products
Tel: 1800 651 146

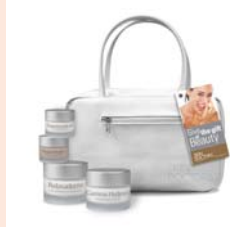


Doctor's orders

Skin Doctors is offering a selection of its most popular products - Relaxaderm, Superceutical, Supermoist and Gamma Hydroxy - in a stylish leather-look white bag. It's bound to be a bestseller in the lead-up to Christmas.

RRP: \$89.95

Stockist: Skin Doctors
Tel: 1800 227 722

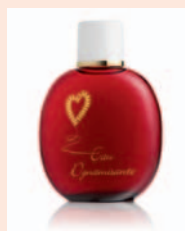


Collector's item

Clarins Eau Dynamisante 20 Year Anniversary Limited Edition has been released in this special collector's bottle. Launched in 1987, Eau Dynamisante was the first treatment fragrance to combine the aromatic properties of plants with their skin care and fragrant benefits.

RRP: \$62

Stockist: Trimex
Tel: (02) 9663 4277



Stars in your eyes

Inspired by the glamorous L'Oréal Paris ambassadors, Color Appeal Star Secrets Trio is a set of three eye shadows to match eye colour. The autographed collection includes a Penelope Cruz palette for women with hazel eyes, Eva Longoria, for dark eyes, and Milla Jovovich, for blue eyes.

RRP: \$19.50

Stockist: L'Oréal Paris
Tel: (03) 9928 3307



Foot fetish

Treat your feet with Linden Leaves foot soak, scrub, massage cream and reviver - all zipped up in a toilet bag with a pair of natural cotton booties for overnight hydration therapy. The sweet floral fragrance is simply divine!

RRP: \$49.95

Stockist: Linden Leaves
Tel: 1800 681 314



DISPENSARY CORNER

EATING chocolate may make you gain weight but at least it can be good for the environment.

An inventor in Britain has developed a new process which turns the by-products of chocolate manufacture into fuel.

Apparently the waste was previously used in landfill, but "now we can make it travel as biofuel" said Andy Pag, who's planning to drive a truck powered by the choco-diesel from England to West Africa on a charity mission this month.

Unfortunately the truck's exhaust still smells like diesel fumes rather than the sweet aroma of chocolate.

PYJAMAS are causing major dissent in the ranks of staff at a hospital in Finland.

Hundreds of health professionals have signed a petition about the new night attire in "garish blues, greens, pinks, yellows and greys," describing the PJs as "very ugly".

However the hospital's administrator Bjoern-Olof Ehrnstrom said he likes the PJs.

"I have used them myself to experiment and I have slept very well for the past two nights," he said.

AGE certainly isn't wearying a 102-year-old man in Lithuania, who last weekend became his country's oldest bridegroom.

Cradle-snatching Stanislovas Grigas married Brione Mikutiene, who at 76 years old is 26 years his junior.

The pair have been apparently courting for the last 17 years.

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