

OTC Update Allergies

With Spring upon us, many customers are suffering from seasonal allergies.

Today our focus is on

Local treatment of Allergic Rhinitis

Rhinitis is inflammation of the lining of the nose. Symptoms of allergic rhinitis are a result of the release of histamine, as part of the body's response to an allergen. Symptoms can include runny nose, sneezing, itching, blocked nose as well as tickly throat and palate.

Local treatment mainly consists of nasal sprays.

Decongestant Nasal Sprays -

work immediately to produce vasoconstriction in the nasal mucosa, thus reducing swelling and nasal congestion - e.g.

oxymetazoline, xylometazoline (Otrivin, Drixine). This sort of

nasal spray should only be used for 3 to 4 days as prolonged use may cause rebound congestion.

Corticosteroid Nasal Sprays -

reduce inflammation and decrease mucus production.

Their onset of effect may take several days. They are sometimes used in combination with a decongestant. Nasal

Corticosteroids may be used long term. e.g. **beclomethasone (Beconase), budesonide (Rhinocort) and mometasone (Nasonex).**

Antihistamine Nasal Sprays -

e.g. **Levocabastine (Livostin)** block the effect of histamine, thus reducing symptoms such as sneezing and runny nose.

Steam inhalations - can help thin nasal secretions and also loosen crusts. Steam alone is effective or menthol, camphor or eucalyptus can give patients the feeling of clearer nasal passages.

Saline Nasal Sprays or drops -

e.g. **Fess** may help to thin the nasal secretions, and decrease nasal congestion and irritation.

Swine flu vax from 30 Sep

HEALTH Minister Nicola Roxon says a national vaccination campaign against Influenza A (H1N1) will commence next week, after the TGA approved registration of CSL's swine flu vaccine.

Trials showed the vaccine has a "high safety and low adverse events profile" and that only one injection is required for adults.

Headache register

THE Brain Foundation and Headache Australia are calling for people who suffer from migraine or chronic headaches to join the Headache Register, as part of Headache and Migraine Awareness Week which kicked off yesterday.

Headache Australia ceo Gerald Edmunds said "Research into headaches and migraines is seriously underfunded but we need mass numbers so that we can approach Government for funding for research."

He said there was no cost and all details will be kept strictly private and never made available to anyone else.

The contact details will be used to send advice about new treatments, with Edmunds saying there are "important developments in the area of conservative, medication-free approaches."

Headache Australia has also launched a new headache diary which focuses on quickly and easily identifying patterns of a headache in a way that will be most meaningful for doctors.

See www.headacheaustralia.org.au.

TGA infringements

PEOPLE accused of committing offences against the Therapeutic Goods Act will now have the option of paying an infringement notice penalty rather than going to court, under new regulations which became effective earlier this month.

The Therapeutic Goods Amendment Regulations commenced on 11 Sep, and allow an issuing officer to give the penalty option as an alternative to being taken to court.

A person issued with an infringement notice is under no compulsion to pay the penalty stated and can still have the matter dealt with by a court, but if they do pay the penalty their liability will be discharged in full.

Grow sales by \$1.07 per script!



Moogoo winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Ella Jeffrey of the Tasmanian School of Pharmacy who was the first **PD** reader to tell us that the major oil used in sorbolene and aqueous creams is paraffin oil.

See this week's comp on **page 2**.

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Priority groups for the vaccination include front line health care and community care workers who have direct contact with patients, people with underlying chronic medical conditions such as asthma, cancers, HIV, heart disease, diabetes and chronic kidney failure, as well as Indigenous people, obese people, pregnant women and parents and guardians of infants under 6 months.

The TGA is still awaiting the results of trials on children 9 and under and has therefore not made a decision on the use of the vaccine in children, Roxon said.

She confirmed that the govt had purchased 21 million doses of the vaccine, with more than 4 million already in CSL warehouses in major cities, with delivery to hospitals and GPs to start this week.

The vaccine will be presented in multi-dose vials and earlier issues around indemnity for providers have been resolved, Roxon added.

172 Australians have died as a result of swine flu, with the minister encouraging everyone to be vaccinated.

Pharmacy E-Bulletin

THIS week's edition of the Repatriation General Hospital Pharmacy E-Bulletin gives an overview of the use of bevacizumab for bowel cancer.

Bevacizumab has recently been approved for PBS reimbursement, and is a recombinant humanised monoclonal antibody which selectively binds to and neutralises the biological activity of human vascular endothelial growth factor.

The bulletin is available at no charge from Chris Alderman on chris.alderman@rgh.sa.gov.au.

SA pharmacy job

THE University of South Australia is recruiting for a new head for its School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences.

The job was advertised in newspapers on the weekend, with the role involving supervision of more than 120 staff and over 1000 students.

"The successful person will have significant international professional and scholarly standing and a track record as an outstanding leader with entrepreneurial skills," the job description says.

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Flu control guidelines

NEW infection control guidelines for patients with influenza-like illnesses have been released today by the Australasian Society for Infectious Diseases.

The guidelines propose standard measures for adoption across Australia, including use of surgical masks, hand hygiene, vaccination of health care staff and a minimum patient separation of two metres.

Full details were published online today at www.mja.com.au.

Survivors wanted

THE Children's Cancer Institute Australia is calling for childhood cancer survivors to take part in a study to map genetic markers determining chances of developing serious illness in later life.

Researcher Dr Lesley Ashton said mapping the factors may help develop more effective individualised treatments based on patients' genetic make-up.

The study is targeting survivors originally treated in NSW or the ACT since 1970; participants can register interest on 1800 682 536.

Colgate Total listed by TGA

COLGATE'S Total toothpaste has been given approval for registration by the Therapeutic Goods Administration as a medicine in Australia, because of its efficacy in treating gum disease.

Colgate Palmolive said the change in status from a cosmetic item to a therapeutic good was a recognition of its benefit in the treatment of gingivitis.

The company's managing director Australia, Chris Pedersen, said Colgate Total is one of the world's most researched toothpastes, with 47 independent clinical trials involving more than 10,000 people.

The product contains a broad spectrum antibacterial ingredient which is adhered to the teeth and gums by a copolymer to prevent plaque reforming.

A systematic review of the plaque and gingivitis trials found that Colgate Total reduced the proportion of sites with plaque by 49%, and also reduced the sites with bleeding by 49%.

"The health of our mouth, teeth

and gums affects our quality of life. Good preventative care, particularly of the gums, is extremely important," Pedersen said.

The company said the paste would continue to be available through all major grocery stores as well as pharmacies.

PAC sessions for pharmacy assistants

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia says it's recognising the importance of pharmacy assistants to the profession by running special weekend presentations for assistants at the upcoming Pharmacy Australia Congress.

The PAC09 Pharmacy Assistants Program runs from 9.30am on both Sat 17 Oct and Sun 18 Oct at the conference at the Sydney Hilton, with topics including quit smoking strategies, selling sun protection, increasing confidence in baby care, OTC treatments for urinary tract infections, hayfever and brittle bones.

The presentations are free of charge if the pharmacy assistant is a staff member of full delegates to the congress.

The PSA said pharmacy assistants outnumber pharmacists by a ratio of more than five to one and it's estimated there are currently over 27,000 pharmacy assistants working across Australia.

"These assistants are often the first person that a consumer meets when they come into a pharmacy to ask for advice," said PSA President Warwick Plunkett.

"Their role is a critical part of the profession of pharmacy and their knowledge and skills are essential to the health and wellbeing of Australians," he added.

More info www.pac2009.com.au.

FDA HIV screening

THE US Food and Drug Administration has approved a new donor screening test for HIV antibodies, designed to screen donated blood and specimens from living and organ donors for specific types of HIV.

The test is one of five assays which run on the automated Abbott Prism System, and can screen for HIV type 1 groups M and O and HIV type 2.



DISPENSARY CORNER

A TURKISH man has been officially recognised as the world's tallest human being, measuring 2.46m high (8 feet 1 inch).

26-year-old Sultan Kosen is also listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as having the largest hands, with a 27.4cm handspan, and the longest feet at 36.3cm - longer than a foot!

The title was previously held by Bao Xishun, a 7 foot 9 inch tall herdsman from Mongolia.

Kosen said he hoped the recognition would help him find love, saying "The first thing I want to do is have a car that I can fit in, but more than that I want to get married."

"Up until now it's been really difficult to find a girlfriend...they were usually scared of me," he said.

COULD this be the next big product from the Cancer Council?

A Chinese woman has reportedly terrified fellow beachgoers when she showed off her "home-made full body sun protection suit" (below).

Mai Lee of Qingdao in eastern China says she devised the unusual outfit after reading about the risk of skin cancer.

"I love jogging and running and I love the beach but I don't want to burn my skin so I cover it all up," she told local media.

Other holidaymakers expressed their horror, with one saying "she looks like a ghost, or one of those Egyptian mummies with a scarlet face - but her eyes and mouth look like holes in a plate."

"It's very creepy".



The strange Chinese sun-suit.

WARNING: THIS PRIZE STINGS!

Nature's Blend has teamed up with **Pharmacy Daily** this week giving readers the chance to win an OmegaHoney Prize Pack each day containing:

- 1 bottle OmegaHoney 450g
- 3 Toy OmegaBees - Alpha, Lino and Ole
- The OmegaBees Activity Book
- OmegaKids Colouring Cook Book



OmegaHoney is a fun and exciting way for kids and grown-ups to get Omega-3, 6 & 9 fatty acids, with the benefits and taste of honey.

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For your chance to win this fabulous prize pack, simply be the first reader to email the correct answer to the daily question below to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

MONDAY'S OMEGA QUESTION:

What are the names of the three Omega's contained in OmegaHoney?

Sales enquiries, phone Nature's Blend on (03) 9773 0600.