

TGA stem cell approval

THE Therapeutic Goods Administration has approved a license for Aussie company, Mesoblast Ltd, to manufacture adult stem cell products.

The license allows Mesoblast to manufacture (in conjunction with TGA licensed contractor Cell Therapeutics) its proprietary Mesenchymal Precursor Cell (MPC) products, and supply them to both hospitals and doctors for the repair and regeneration of patient tissues.

Slated to take on the bone repair market, the company's initial output will include products for long bone, stress and vertebral fractures.

"Gaining a license from the TGA, one of the world's foremost regulatory bodies, to manufacture our adult stem cell products for supply to Australian patients is a major validating step in Mesoblast's history," said Mesoblast ce, Silviu Iteacu.

"It underscores the robustness of our manufacturing process and the excellent safety profile of our products in patients.

"To our knowledge, this is the first culture-expanded adult stem cell product that has received manufacturing approval anywhere in the world," he added.

Fat chance of weight loss

RESEARCH released last week at the 11th International Congress on Obesity in Stockholm, Sweden has found no evidence that slimming supplements help with weight loss.

Two studies presented at the congress found that the supplements tested were no more effective than placebo, with one of the researchers saying that few of the products had previously been the subject of clinical trials.

"There are scores of slimming supplements out there claiming weight-loss effects through all sorts of mechanisms of action," said Dr Thomas Elrott of the University of Gottingen in Germany.

"We have so-called fat magnets, mobilisers and dissolvers, as well as appetite tamers, metabolism boosters, carb blockers and so on.

"The market for these is huge, but unlike for regulated drugs, effectiveness does not have to be proven for these to be sold," he said.

Dr Elrott and his team tested nine popular supplements bought from pharmacies in Germany against placebo in a randomised trial.

Average weight loss was between



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1kg and 2kg across seven of the weight loss products, and averaged at 1.2kg in the placebo group.

No statistically significant difference in weight loss was found for any of the products.

Elrott said it was the first study to include nine supplements with different proposed methods of action "and we found that not a single product was any more effective than placebo pills in producing weight loss over the two months of the study, regardless of how it claims to work".

Another study presented at the congress involved a systematic review of all existing clinical trials on a range of popular slimming supplements, again finding no evidence that any of the products worked.

FDA halts Avandia

FOLLOWING its decision to keep the controversial diabetes pill, Avandia, on the US market (PD 15 Jul), the Food and Drug Authority has called a halt to a current comparative study of the safety of Avandia and its competitor, Actos.

The trial's halt comes in response to evidence presented to the FDA when it was considering Avandia's position, that suggested the drug heightened patients' risk of heart problems.

Although the evidence was not definitive enough to keep the drug off the market, it was enough for the FDA to advise new patients against enrolling in Avandia trials, as well as forcing the halt to its Actos study, which pitted both drugs against each other in a bid to see which one had the greater safety profile.

Novasep joins Action

PHARMACEUTICAL goods manufacturers Novasep and instrAction have signed an agreement, allowing the pair to offer the industry a combination of instrAction's proprietary API-selective stationary phases (Instruction(R) Receptor Phase) and Novasep's purification capabilities and chromatography technologies.

It is hoped, through the alliance that the companies will be able to develop, operate and/or supply optimised large scale chromatography processes for purifying synthetic and semi-synthetic compounds.

PCA10 CPD points

THE Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has released a list of how many continuing professional points can be earned, per seminar, at its upcoming Pharmacy Australia Congress (PAC10).

The list is as follows: (**Thu 28 Oct**) Military Pharmacy Special Interest Group 1 CPD credit; Pharmacy in Health Forum (open session) 1 CPD credit; Pharmacy in Health Workshop 2 CPD credits; Pharmacy Practice in Government; 1 CPD credit; Mandatory CPD – Making it Work for You 2 CPD credits; AACP Accredited Pharmacist Forum 2 CPD credits.

(**Fri 29 Oct**) Opening Plenary Session 1 CPD credit; Concurrent Sessions: Morning 1 CPD credit; Concurrent Sessions: Afternoon 1 CPD credit; PSOTY 1 CPD credit.

(**Sat 30 Oct**) Plenary Session: Practicing Professionally in a Commercial Environment 1 CPD credit; Concurrent Sessions: Morning 1 CPD credit; Plenary Session: Pharmacists as Communicators 1 CPD credit; Concurrent Sessions: Afternoon 1 CPD credit; Motivational Interviewing Workshop 2 CPD credits.

(**Sun 31 Oct**) Breakfast: Marketing for Pharmacists 1 CPD credit; Concurrent Sessions: 1 CPD credit; Plenary Session 1 CPD credit; Concurrent Sessions: Afternoon 1 CPD credit and Motivational Interviewing Workshop 2 CPD credits.

PAC10 is set to take place in Melbourne between 28 - 30 Oct, and all-up delegates have the opportunity to garner a total of 35 CPD points.

For more info, or to register go to www.pac10.com.au.

WIN AN AL'CHEMY VITAMIN MASQUE



This week **Pharmacy Daily** has teamed up with **The Purist Company** and is giving readers the chance to win the Al'chemy Ginkgo & Jojoba Intensive Moisture Vitamin Masque valued at \$17.95.

The Al'chemy hair care range caters to all hair types with its complete collection of shampoos, conditioners and award winning treatment products, which leave your hair youthful and radiant looking.

Keep your hair nourished throughout the winter season with the Al'chemy Ginkgo & Jojoba Intensive Moisture Vitamin Masque, rich in certified organic avocado oil and nourishing Australian jojoba oils combined with rice amino

acids, wheat protein and anti-oxidants. Especially suited for colour treated hair, it is a deep treatment that will help restore moisture, manageability and strength to hair.

For a chance to win your very own Al'chemy Ginkgo & Jojoba Intensive Moisture Vitamin Masque, simply send in your answer to the question below:

In 25 words or less tell us about your favourite Al'chemy product

Email your answer to: comp@pharmacydaily.com.au

There are five masques to be won and the lucky winners will be announced in PD next Monday.

Pharmacy Daily Pharmacy Job of the Day!

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NPS appointments

THE National Prescribing Service has appointed two new directors, including clinical pharmacologist and practising medical oncologist Dr Winston Liauw, who is a director in the prescriber/researcher class, replacing Shane Carney.

The other new director is Dr Andrew Knight who replaces Dr Shiong Tan as the GP class director.

Travel Specials

WELCOME to *Pharmacy Daily's* travel feature. Each week we highlight a couple of great travel deals which we're sure will be of interest to everyone in the pharmacy industry.

BENTOURS is offering some great earlybird specials on its 2011 Viking River Cruise inventory in Russia and the Ukraine.

Guests who book either a 2011 13-day 'Waterways of the Czars' voyage or a 2011 12-day 'Footsteps of the Cossacks' cruise before 31 Oct will save up to \$2000 off the cruise price.

Prices for the Waterways voyage start from \$3,299 and \$2,099 for the Cossacks cruise, inclusive of the discount.

Call 1800 221 712 for details.

QUICKBEDS has released rooms at the five-star Sheraton Mirage in Port Douglas for \$160 per night for stays from 28 Jul to 04 Aug.

Staying in a Deluxe Garden Room, the packages include a buy one get one free buffet breakfast deal.

For info see www.quickbeds.com.

HURTIGRUTEN has cut the price of its 12-day Norwegian 'Classic Round Voyage' by 30% for voyages booked by 30 Sep.

Priced from \$1680pp the cruises depart between 05 Oct and 31 Dec 2010, call 1800 623 267.

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NZ pharmacy primary care

NEW Zealand publicly listed pharmacy group Pharmacybrands has signalled an intention to look for "opportunities to provide a broader range of primary care services funded through our network of pharmacies".

Pharmacybrands was formed from the merger of Life Pharmacy and Pharmacybrands, and represents 257 retail outlets across New Zealand under the Unichem, Amcal, Life Pharmacy and Care Chemist brands - about 28% of the total NZ market.

Speaking at the company's annual general meeting this week, chairman Peter Merton said "It is widely recognised that pharmacy can contribute a lot more to

primary care than simply providing a funded dispensary service".

He said that the planned NZ implementation of integrated Electronic Health Records would also be an important step towards "realising the potential of pharmacy," improving the efficiency of service delivery.

Despite a very difficult NZ economy Pharmacybrands saw sales grow by about 1.3% in the last financial year, with the company's focus on "weight management, core health areas such as analgesics and natural health products" paying off.

Sales of beauty products had fallen last year and continued to be erratic, Merton said.

Blackmores says its time to stress less!



YESTERDAY, against the calming sound of waves crashing onto Sydney's Balmoral Beach, Blackmores officially launched its latest stress buster, the 'Everyday Stress Formula'.

According to Blackmores' director of education, Pam Stone, the company decided to create the supplement after an Australian stress survey found that Aussies need more 'positive' choices to deal effectively with stress.

"We are well programed to deal with stress," Stone said.

"It's just the wrong programing for today," she added.

The programing in question, according to Stone, has been with us for over 50,000 years and is designed to help humans to escape from predators- such as the saber tooth tiger.

"Our saber tooth tiger is much different," Stone said.

"Whilst our system may help us to escape a tiger, it does not equip us to deal with 21st century stress," she added.

Thus the Everyday Stress Formula was born.

The product is designed for busy people who need help with focus, concentration and calmness, but who do not want to be sedated or lose their dynamism.

Active ingredients include Panax Ginseng, which is said to hinder adrenal gland depletion and thus aid stamina, whilst also promoting a more efficient and economical release of corticosteroids and adrenaline into the system- so active Aussies are not at the mercy of their own body's stress response.

The other active ingredient, Lactium, is derived from a protein found in cows milk, which produces calming (not sedative) qualities.

Speaking to **PD** about the product's packaging, Blackmores' senior product manager, Lynda Pallone, said the company discovered that "stress is a little bit taboo, people don't like to admit it".

"So we created vials to carry the tablets that are small and discreet".

Pictured above, the Blackmores team welcome guests to the launch from left Marnie Corrigan, Lynda Pallone, and Annabel Selby-Jones.



DISPENSARY CORNER

INDIAN cricket fans are certainly passionate about their sport.

Ten special very limited-edition versions of a new biography of Sachin Tendulkar have been sold at a cost of US\$75,000 each - before they have even been produced.

The unique publications are particularly special because they will be printed using the cricketer's great's blood.

"The signature page will be mixed with Sachin's blood - mixed into the paper pulp so it's a red resin," said the chief executive of the publishing firm, Kraken.

He said the 852-page book is designed to be "the ultimate tribute to a living sporting legend".

A further 1000 regular copies - without the special blood ingredient - will go on sale at about US\$2500 each, with the books individually numbered and personally signed.

ABOUT twenty babies born in Great Britain since the end of the Second World War have been named Adolf.

The unusual finding is the result of a survey by UK firm Findmypast.co.uk, which shows that the most recent Adolf was born in 2005.

The study of official records also found a number of unusual names, with ten babies born in the late 1800s given the name Fish Fish - including one who incredibly also had the surname Fish - that is, a full name of Fish Fish Fish!

It also revealed the British predilection for soccer, with eight boys named Pele after Brazil won the World Cup in 1970.

A US man has been charged after allegedly shooting his wife with a wad of toilet paper stuffed into a pistol.

Details are fairly sketchy, but the 38-year-old apparently shot at her after she returned home at midnight one night last week.

The woman suffered a powder burn from the gunshot, while the man reportedly claimed he wasn't trying to wipe her out.