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Actilyse approval

THE Therapeutic Goods

Administration has extended the time-window for administration of alteplase (Actilyse) – also known as tpa from 3 hours to 4.5 hours after an acute stroke.

“The extra 90 minutes will see thousands more stroke patients eligible for treatment, but we must reinforce the need for stroke patients to be admitted to hospital as soon as possible,” said Professor Christopher Levi, Director of Acute Stroke Services, John Hunter Hospital.

“The core principle when it comes to acute stroke intervention is that ‘time is brain’,” he added.

The decision to expand on Actilyse’s prior three hour approval was made following the findings of the European Cooperative Acute Stroke Study III trial which found that the drug “significantly improves outcomes in patients when administered up to 4.5 hours after the onset of stroke compared to placebo”.

iNova’s new therapy

INOVA Pharmaceuticals has secured the rights to bring a new therapy option for the treatment of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease to Australia, Erdosteine.

The drug works by improving the rheological (flow) properties of the sputum and reducing sputum volume.

The manufacturer also says the product is also thought to reduce bacterial adhesiveness and to have anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant properties.

Although not yet approved for use in Australia by the TGA, iNova representatives are confident of the drug gaining Australian marketing approval, following its approval in Europe, South America and Asia.

NZ Guild slams Abbott recall

THE voluntary withdrawal of Abbott’s sibutramine (Reductil) from the New Zealand market has drawn criticism from The Pharmacy Guild of New Zealand.

“The process is a mess, made worse because this is not a subsidised medicine,” said Annabel Young, CE of the NZ Guild.

The withdrawal, now effective in Australia, Canada, NZ, Europe and the US, is a result of the five year SCOUT study, whose final results revealed that overweight and obese patients taking sibutramine had a higher rate of cardiovascular events than patients who managed their weight through diet and exercise alone (PD Mon).

As the sixth medicine recall in NZ this year, the event has added fuel to the fire started by Guild president Ian Johnson who has taken legal action over the NZ recall process which he argues places the onus on pharmacists to fix drug company’s messes’ and work extra hours for free.

According to the Guild, the Abbott recall has been particularly badly handled by the drug company, whose Reductil patients in NZ (estimated at around 4,000-5,000 people) mainly found out from media yesterday morning, before notification was sent to pharmacists in the afternoon.

“The fax sent to pharmacies regarding the recall process is [also] unclear,” a statement from the Guild said.

“All calls to Abbott from the Guild team regarding this recall have not been answered,” the statement added.

Speaking on behalf of the Guild Young said that Abbott had not been “upfront about the work

involved in the recall”.

According to Young, in addition to the usual recall procedures the drug company has also asked pharmacists to provide patients with a refund for Reductil, whether they supplied the original medicine or not.

“Although other recalls have required pharmacists to supply their time and expertise for free, this is the first time a pharmaceutical company has asked pharmacists to supply cash as part of the procedure,” she said.

“How are they able to do this when they have no knowledge of the original price at which the medicine was sold to the patient?”

“It is clear that Abbott can’t be bothered to do the work themselves and are expecting pharmacists to manage the process with no guidelines and for no recompense,” she added.

In closing its comments, the Guild said that this latest recall fiasco highlights the need for a clear medicine recall process to be developed in NZ.

Pfizer acquires King

PFIZER Pharmaceuticals has struck a deal with King Pharmaceuticals to acquire the latter for US\$3.6 billion.

The move represents a 40% per share premium on King’s closing share price at the start of the week.

According to Pfizer the deal is set to shore up its earnings in the wake of Lipitor, the world’s best selling cholesterol treatment, losing its patent in late 2011.

King Pharmaceuticals has a drug portfolio incl. Altace, Skelaxin, Levoxyl, Embeda, Acurox and Remoxy.

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Certified Organics are great and even better when buying them in a gift set, the perfect Christmas present for all ages.

This week PD is giving readers the chance to win an Organics Pamper kit, one of the great gift bags from the NEW Organic Collection.

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For your chance to win, simply be the first reader to send through the correct answer to the daily question below:

What kind of bag does the Organic Kits come in?

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Hint: Visit www.dbcosmetics.com.au

Congratulations to yesterday’s winner, Alana Taylor, from Covidien - Tyco Healthcare Pty Ltd.

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Health, Beauty and New Products

Welcome to our weekly feature with all the latest health, beauty and new products for pharmacy!

Suppliers wanting to promote products in this feature should email advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au.



DISPENSARY CORNER

BIG bub ban.

A three-year old toddler, Xiao Hao, has been banned from local nurseries, after his blusterous play was deemed a danger to other pupils.

Weighing it at a massive 65.5kgs, Hao has spilt medical opinion after his mother pleaded with doctors (through the press) to help her child slim down.

"He means no harm he is just big and likes to play," she said.

"I like to take him swimming for exercise but it is hard finding trunks to fit him and even the rubber rings are too small," she added.

According to reports, experts have said that it is possible Hao has a growth hormone disorder.

"He is not just overweight but very tall as well so we may be able to treat him if it really is hormonal," said Dr Lu Hong of the Guangdong Children's Hospital.

On the other end of the spectrum, some doctors have commented that Hao's family may be over feeding him as part what they are calling the 'Little Emperor' syndrome, caused via the country's one child policy.

SURVIVE them, then marry them.

Two sisters, Xiao and Yin Lin who are masters of kung fu have issued a challenge to potential suitors, which would see them undertake a series of extreme martial arts challenges, the survivors of which would be granted permission to marry them.

The contest includes an archery component and a heavy lifting challenge, followed by a full-on contact combat battle with the sister of the suitors choice.

If they defeat the lady in question, they may propose marriage.

"If they can't beat us they aren't worthy," said Lin.

"We tried dating agencies but the men we met were all too weak, we could beat them easily," Yin added.

"So we went back to ancient ways called Bi Wu Zhao Qin - which was the way warrior princesses would find their men," she added.



Protect summer lips

Banana Boat's Aloe Vera SPF 30+ Lip Balm, is designed to protect lips from the elements and, of course from the ill effects of sun exposure. Waterproof for up to four hours, the balm is clear and also helps to seal in moisture. The formulation's moisturising ingredients also helps to nourish lips to relieve chapping, peeling and chapping.

RRP: \$3.20

Stockist: 1800 810 310

Christmas is So...?

Affordable fragrance brand So...? has released five new gift ranges for Christmas including its traditional tangerine and orange blossom So...? range; an orange, pomegranate and passionfruit scented So...? SuperStar range; a strawberry, jasmine, chocolate and vanilla scented So...? Sinful range; a blackcurrant, pineapple and citrus So...? Kiss range and a pink pepper, clementine, vanilla and sandalwood So...? Eternal range. Included under each fragrance banner are three gift sets.

RRP: \$11.95, Double Trouble Gift Sets; \$14.95, Gorgeous Gift Sets; \$27.95, Bliss Gift Ses; and \$24.95 Glam Bag Gift Sets

Stockist: 02 8709 8800



Gel wax cools down the heat

The latest hair removal product from Veet is its 'Delightful Gel Wax'. Formulated with almond oil for sensitive skin, the gel-wax is designed to be applied warm, rather than hot, and does not run or drip. As an added bonus, the product can be used on sensitive areas including the bikini, underarm, and upper lip. Unlike most other wax products, left-over remnants of the gel wax can be rinsed off with water.

RRP: \$17.99 (350g)

Stockist: 1800 226 766



Braun gives out puppies for Christmas



This month Braun has released a special gift pack for its IR Ear Thermometer Braun ThermoScan. Designed for new mums and practical gift-buyers the gift pack includes the brand's popular IR Ear thermometer (which features ExacTemp technology, a flexible pre-warmed tip, a unique guidance system which beeps when the thermometer is incorrectly positioned and one-button operation); as well as a plush toy Puppy dog with a golden bow.

RRP: \$129

Stockist: 1800 003 431

Somersby summer violets

A new perfume range titled Somersby Violets is set for release this month, and includes a 100ml EDT Spray, a EDT 12ml Spray, a 75g Body Spray, Perfumed Luxury Soap and Perfumed Talc. An affordable gift option, the range draws its inspiration from English heritage gardens, and includes top notes of violet and bilberry, as well as a heart of violet, jasmine, mimosa and pink lotus and a base note of musk with heliotrope and vanilla.

RRP: \$19.95, 100ml EDT Spray; \$9.95, EDT 12ml Spray; \$7.95, 75g Body Spray; \$5.95, Perfumed Luxury Soap; and \$9.95, Perfumed Talc

Stockist: 02 8709 8800

