Sigma wins Wyeth battle

SIGMA Pharmaceuticals has won its lengthy battle against Wyeth Pharmaceuticals for the right to release a generic version of Wyeth’s anti-depressant Effexor-XR (venlafaxine hydrochloride).

The action began in April 2009 when Sigma challenged Wyeth’s Australian Effexor-XR Extended Release Formulation patent after having been granted ARTG registration for its generic Eclavea-XR version in Feb 2009.

Wyeth however filed a cross claim in May 2009, claiming patent infringement by Sigma and succeeded in getting an interlocutory injunction which restrained the latter from supplying Eclavea-XR until the case went to trial.

Shortly after the injunction, generic drug makers Alphapharma and Generic Health (which also wished to release Effexor-XR generics Enlafax-XR and GenericHealth XR respectively) joined the Sigma case, which was heard in November 2010 and which saw the Federal Court uphold the Extended Release patent and bar the trio from “importing, marketing, taking orders for, selling, supplying, and offering to supply” their own versions of the drug in Australia.

In October this year the trio won the right to appeal the decision, and this week had their wishes granted with Federal Court Judges declaring Wyeth’s patent invalid, ordering that the cross-claim be dismissed and that Wyeth pay 80% of the trio’s court costs.

FDA approves drugs

THE US FDA has approved Isentress (raltegravir) for use with other antiretroviral drugs for the treatment of HIV-1 infection for children and adolescents aged between two and 18.

Isentress belongs to the HIV integrase strand transfer inhibitors class of drugs and works by slowing the spread of HIV in the body.

The drug was first approved for adults in 2007.

MEANWHILE the FDA has also approved Edarbycyl (azilsartan medoxomil and chlorthalidone) for the treatment of hypertension to lower blood pressure in adults.

The drug is the only fixed-dose therapy in the US to combine an angiotensin II receptor blocker with the diuretic chlorothalidone in a once-daily, single tablet.

What women want

A NEW NZ Roy Morgan survey aimed at finding out what are the most important factors contributing to female purchases of skincare and cosmetics found that ‘value for money’ is the most influential factor, with 65% of the survey’s respondents (aged 14+) nominating it as important.

The second most important factor was ‘quality brand’ (58%), followed by ‘sun protection factor’ (54%), ‘hypoaallergenic’ (44%), ‘not tested on animals’ (42%), ‘gentleness’ (40%) and anti-aging benefits (30%).

Heart hospitalisations

THE number of acute myocardial infarction (AMI) and unstable angina (UA) hospitalisations increased between 1993–94 and 2007–08 (79.5% and 33.1%, respectively), according to a new AIHW report.

The report, based on the trends and patterns in hospital data, found that in 2007–08 there were almost 56,000 hospitalisations for AMI and 39,000 hospitalisations for UA.

The report also found that the rate of transfer associated with acute coronary syndrome hospitalisations has increased over the past decade, whilst the length of stay for acute coronary syndrome hospitalisations has declined.

Events Calendar

WELCOME to Pharmacy Daily’s Continuing Professional Development Calendar, featuring upcoming events and opportunities to earn CPE and CPD points.

If you have an upcoming event you’d like us to feature, email info@pharmacydaily.com.au.

22 Jan: Brisbane Senior First Aid and CPR Course; PSA Qld Branch Office, Dutton Park, Brisbane; email - educationqld@psa.org.au.

02 Feb: Anaphylaxis Training for Pharmacists, Charles Darwin University, email - sa_branch@psa.org.au.

24 - 26 Feb: Guild Pharmacy Academy, NSW Convention; Novotel Manly Pacific- for info call Rob 02 9467 7100.