

SYDNEY 3-5th September



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Antibiotics and the pill

THE NPS is encouraging women to seek the advice of their GP or pharmacist if they are on the pill and prescribed an antibiotic.

The advice is part of its campaign to get consumers MedicineWise, with the NPS aiming to help consumers separate fact from fiction.

“There are only two antibiotics which are thought to affect how well some hormonal contraceptives work,” said NPS MedicineWise clinical adviser Dr Philippa Binns.

These two are rifampicin – sold under the brand names Rifadin and Rimycin – and rifabutin – sold as Mycobutin, and are usually only used to treat certain bacterial infections that are serious such as tuberculosis and methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, and for preventing meningitis.

“Not all antibiotics interfere with how well hormonal contraceptives work,” Binns said.

“However there are exceptions, so it’s important for women to always check whether their antibiotic may have an impact,” she added.

Too many antipsychotics

ANTIPSYCHOTIC medications are being overprescribed for the management of behavioural and psychological symptoms experienced by people with dementia, according to Alzheimer’s Australia.

The comments follow a report on ABC’s *Lateline* last week which

highlighted a number of examples of inappropriate use of antipsychotic medications with people living with dementia, including the coronial inquest into the death of dementia patient John Arthur Burns who died from a cerebral infarction while receiving high doses of the antipsychotic drug haloperidol.

According to Alzheimer’s Australia, whilst antipsychotic medications play an important role in the treatment of some people with dementia, they are associated with very serious risks and side effects, and should generally only be used for a limited time, and only after other approaches have been tried.

Moreover the organisation said that in as many as 80% of the 50-100,000 Australians with dementia in Australia receiving antipsychotic medications, the drugs’ potential risks are likely to outweigh their potential benefits.

“We know that antipsychotics can have very serious side effects, including risks of death and stroke,” Alzheimer’s Australia said.

“There are numerous evidence-based approaches to responding to behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia that do not require antipsychotic medications (assessing and treating possible causes of agitation such as pain, loneliness or fear for example), and many instances of nursing homes that have successfully reduced use of antipsychotic medications among people with dementia to a minimum.

“Alzheimer’s Australia holds that the current overuse of antipsychotic medications among people with dementia is a human rights issue, and one that can and should be addressed by regulatory bodies, clinicians and service providers,” the organisation added.

Want to join the NPS?

NPS is hunting for a new Non-Executive Director to join its team.

The organisation said it is seeking a Director who is a strategic decision maker with strong commercial experience.

The candidate will also, according to NPS need to be entrepreneurial and business minded with a track record in building and utilising networks to influence.

“Previous relevant experience at board level is essential as is a desire to work in a collaborative culture where integrity and a commitment to ethical behaviour are core,” said NPS, see - nps.org.au/careers.

WIN A LE TAN PRIZE PACK



Every day this week, *Pharmacy Daily* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a Fast Tan Prize Pack from **Le Tan**, valued at over \$60.

The pack includes Le Can in Deep Bronze 150g; Flawless Legs in Deep Bronze 75g; Foaming Mousse in Deep Bronze 110ml; Instant Face Tan 75ml; Le Tan in Le Can in Bronze 45g.

Whether you spray it, pump it or spread it, Australia’s favourite artificial tan & original award winning formula means there is no excuse not to fake the bake this season.

Providing Australians with their secret to a bronzed glow, Le Tan’s self tanners provide a natural, streak free look that smells gorgeous.

For your chance to win this great prize pack, simply be the first person to send through the correct answer to the question below.

How often does one Le Tan in Le Can sell?

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

Hint! Visit www.letan.com.au/self-tan

Congratulations to yesterday’s winner, Leila Nehme from **Ranbaxy Australia!**

Genzyme pulls Campath

GENZYME is withdrawing its leukemia drug Campath from the US and EU markets, in preparation to launch it in a new dosage and under the name Lemtrada for the treatment of MS.

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.

25-26 Aug: PSA Adventure Education Weekend, Stewarts Bay Lodge, Port Arthur - lorraine.norris@psa.org.au.

26 Aug: PSA Qld Branch Medicines Update 2012, Pharmacy Australia Centre of Excellence Building, Dutton Park, Brisbane - 07 3896 1900.

26 Aug: Regional Seminar Series- Immunology, Tamworth, NSW, beryl.park@psa.org.au.

29 Aug: HMR Accredited Pharmacist’s Workshop: Guild Training Victoria, Hawthorn, Victoria, 6-10pm Kate.castle@vic.guild.org.au.

30 Aug: Stroke prevention in atrial fibrillation: a new era, South Australia, www.psa.org.au.

02 Sep: Senior First Aid and CPR, Dutton Park, Brisbane www.pulsestart.com.au

03-05 Sep: Essential Pharmacy Financial Management 3-day Workshop, Sydney, fmrcbusdev.com.au/pharmacy-2

13-16 Sep: Pharmacy Business Network, National Convention Centre Canberra, pharmacybusinessnetwork.com.

15-16 Sep: PSA Qld Sunshine Weekend, Sea World Resort, Gold Coast, Queensland, educationqld@psa.org.au.

02-06 Oct: Pharmacy Guild of Australia Offshore Conference 2012, Waikiki, Hawaii - pgahawaii2012@arinex.com.au.

19-21 Oct: PSA Pharmacy Australia Congress, Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre - www.psa.org.au/pac.

01-04 Nov: SHPA 38th annual conference - Medicines Management 2012, Canberra - mm2012shpa.com.

Alcohol funding

THE Federal Government has announced funding for several projects designed to reduce alcohol related harm in the community.

Funding winners include the National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Related Disorders which will receive \$750,000 to further its work.

One million dollars will also be provided for projects that raise awareness of the risks of harmful drinking, particularly during pregnancy, including the Foundation of Alcohol Research and Education to work with health professionals in raising awareness with patients about the risks of harmful drinking.

DrinkWise Australia will also score funds to work with industry to develop 'point of sale' info for consumers at liquor retailers, clubs, pubs and hotels.

Win with OptiDerma

TODAY OptiDerma and *Pharmacy Daily* are giving readers the chance to win one of six OptiDerma Prize Packs, valued at \$59.85 each.

OptiDerma products are produced from fresh paw paw refined and stabilised through a patented Optimised Fruit Extract process.

Today's prize pack includes: 90ml Activated Healing Gel, 500ml Moisturising Skin Support and 125ml Burn Spray.

For your chance to win simply tell us: What fruit is used in the Optimised Fruit Extract (OFE[®]) in the formulation of OptiDerma[®] products?

Send your answers to comp@pharmacydaily.com.au.

For more information on the OptiDerma range, check out the pharmacy on-line training at www.optiderma.com.au.

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WOUND SUPPORT



Chronic disease and death

MORTALITY rates from multiple chronic conditions in Australia are underestimated according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

The comments come in the wake of a report by the AIHW, *Multiple causes of death: an analysis of all natural and selected chronic disease causes of death 1997-2007*, which for the first time used multiple causes of death statistics (instead of the traditional analysis method

Australian trauma

THIS month's *Medical Journal of Australia* has some bad news for people visiting regional trauma centres, with a study from the University of Sydney finding they are less likely to survive than those who attend a major metropolitan trauma centre.

Conducted by the University's Sydney Nursing School, the study looked at the NSW Trauma Registry data from 2003 to 2007 for patients aged 15 and over, and found that the proportion of patients receiving care at a regional trauma centre increased over time, even though mortality rates were significantly higher than at a major Level I trauma centre.

"Regional trauma centres play an important role in the delivery of trauma care, but often lack specialty resources," a statement from the authors said.

According to the study the major metropolitan centres received a higher proportion of fatally injured patients who were pedestrians, or had fallen more than a metre or had suffered burns or violence.

Deaths at regional trauma centres more commonly resulted from motorcycle or bicycle crashes.

In addition, the report found that road trauma and falls were the most common causes of injury and, over the study period, motor vehicle crashes decreased as a cause of injury while falls increased.

Interestingly the report found a small reduction in mortality after major trauma over the study period.

which focused on one underlying cause of death) to describe patterns of chronic disease mortality in Australia.

"Some chronic diseases are more likely to be reported as an associated cause of death, rather than the main cause of death," said AIHW spokesperson Ann Hunt.

"Traditional analysis ignores associated causes of death, and so underestimates the contribution of diseases such as chronic kidney failure, diabetes, asthma, dementia and Alzheimer diseases and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease to deaths in Australia," Hunt added.

According to the report, an average of three diseases contributed to each death due to natural causes in Australia in 2007, and only 20% of these deaths were due to a single disease.

Interestingly the report also showed a doubling in the number of deaths where there were five or more causes from 11% in 1997 to 21% in 2007.

Researchers also found that the group with the highest average number of contributing diseases causing death were aged between 60 and 89, whilst for deaths involving chronic diseases, coronary heart disease, hypertensive diseases and diabetes were leading contributing causes.

"CHD contributed to nearly half of deaths involving diabetes, and more than one third involving chronic and unspecified kidney failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or asthma," said Hunt.

"One quarter of deaths involving dementia or Alzheimer disease also involved influenza or pneumonia," she added.

MEANWHILE Hunt also said that studying multiple cause data enables researchers to garner a more complete picture of all diseases contributing to death.

This in turn can support targeted prevention, treatment and service planning, as well as to inform surveillance, guide research investments and enhance health measures such as estimates of burden of disease.



DISPENSARY CORNER

WANT to buy a life?

An eccentric young multi millionaire, Shane Butcher, is sick of his life and has decided to sell it.

Hailing from Tampa Bay in Florida, the 29 year old man is selling his chain of R.U Game? computer game shops, two waterfront homes with all contents, three cars (Lotus Elise, Honda Element, Honda Accord) and even his beloved (or not so beloved?) pet dog for US\$3.5m.

The sale is taking place on the online auction site eBay, with Butcher saying he plans to use the funds to go travelling with his wife.

GET your heart working.

Two Canadian kayakers had an extra heart workout, when a huge humpback whale chose the spot in-between their kayaks to breach.

The mother and daughter duo, Rhonda and Samantha Burmeister, had paused for a moment to admire a swarm of seagulls who were diving for bait fish in the water nearby their kayaks, whilst paddling off Avila Beach in California.

The encounter was captured on camera by Rhonda who was in the midst of filming the birds when the whale surfaced for the first time, very very close to Samantha.

The whale then disappeared only to breach closer to Rhonda.

Speaking to media about the encounter Rhonda said "I wasn't expecting it".

"Oh my gosh, I was almost taken by this beautiful thing, and it would've been worth it, it would've been worth it," she added.

Unfortunately a pair of kayakers behind Rhonda were not so lucky, with the whale's breach over-tipping their kayaks and dumping them in the water.

