

## Today's issue of PD

*Pharmacy Daily* today features two pages of news, plus the **August MIMS Monthly Update**, and full pages from:

- Glucojel
- Maxofen

## Attract customers

**GLUCOJEL** jellybeans can help reel more customers into Australian pharmacies.

Learn more about a discount offer on these long-standing favourites on **page three**.

## Maximise your day

**NEW** Maxofen from Nova Pharmaceuticals combines paracetamol and ibuprofen for double-action relief from acute pain and fever.

Available in packs of 12 and 30 tablets - more on **page four**.

# WA expanded scope pilot announced

**WESTERN** Australia is the latest state to move towards greater access to care from community pharmacists, with WA Minister for Health Meredith Hammat announcing 17 common acute and chronic conditions that will soon be treatable by qualified pharmacists.

Opening the Pharmacy WA Forum yesterday, Hammat (**pictured**) advised delegates that community pharmacists will be able to diagnose, treat and prescribe appropriate Schedule 4 medicines for a broad range of conditions through the Enhanced Access Community Pharmacy Pilot.

The first group of WA pharmacists are preparing to start the necessary training in prescribing and clinical practice and will be able to deliver the pilot services towards the end of 2026.

Pharmacy Guild of Australia WA Branch President, Andrew Ngeow, welcomed the announcement.

"Community pharmacy, as a sector, looks forward to being



able to deliver a broader range of services into the future, in every metropolitan and regional area of Western Australia," Ngeow said.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) WA President Kristian Ray also hailed the announcement, saying it reflects the growing role of pharmacists in providing timely, accessible care for more health concerns.

"Empowering pharmacists to practice to our full scope means giving our community access to timely care, when and where they need it," Ray said.

"Today's announcement

demonstrates just how much more pharmacists can do to support patients, building on the overwhelmingly positive evidence from pilots in Queensland and internationally.

"WA pharmacists are ready to deliver the same high-quality care to our communities," he concluded.

Conditions covered include:

- asthma
- smoking cessation
- shingles
- impetigo
- skin conditions
- mild, acute musculoskeletal pain
- allergic and nonallergic rhinitis
- ear infections
- acute nausea and vomiting
- acute minor wound management
- gastroesophageal reflux/disease
- hormonal contraception
- weight loss and management of obesity
- oral health risk assessment and fluoride application. KB

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References: 1. CELEBREX RELIEF® (celecoxib) Product Information.

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## Dispensary Corner

**DESPITE** seeming healthy, plant-based meat alternatives may actually be ageing people from the inside out.

At least, that is the opinion of Tracy Campoli, a certified 'holistic health coach' from Florida, who warned that the products can cause chronic inflammation and visible signs of ageing.

The fitness coach analysed five different 'healthy foods' that are naturally highly processed, and concluded that fake meat is one of the worst.

"Just because it's plant-based, it doesn't mean it's healthy - you've got to read your labels," Campoli warned her 347,000 subscribers on YouTube.

She claimed that some popular plant-based meat alternatives are deficient in vital nutrients like protein, and are instead full of additives, seed oils and salt.

"You might think: 'I'm going to avoid red meat because of heart disease, sodium and it's better for the planet'.

"But more plant-based alternatives might actually be causing some fine wrinkles on your face."

Wholegrain breads that are full of hidden sugars and emulsifiers, granola, rice cakes and gluten-free snack products are also no good, Campoli said.

"Many of these products contain hidden sugars which contribute to glycation - meaning it stiffens and weakens your collagen, making your skin saggy and contributing to the visible signs of ageing."

## Steroid script fraud warning

**PHARMACEUTICAL** Defence Limited (PDL) has issued an alert to pharmacists around member reports of prescriptions for large quantities of anabolic steroids, such as testosterone injections.

Red flags include directions that may not align with current therapeutic guidelines and an unusual number of repeats, and they are often marked as "regulation 49".

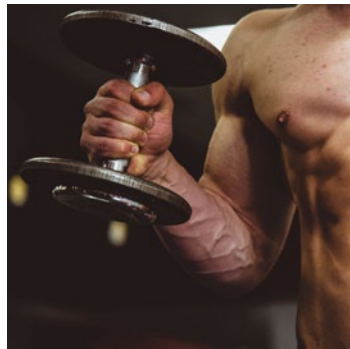
PDL notes that some of the prescriptions were electronic scripts from a prescriber registered in Munno Para, South Australia, with prescriber number '2368799'.

Pharmacists should check the websites of health departments in NSW, Qld and WA, which have provided warnings about the validity of some prescriptions.

While fraudulent electronic prescriptions are rare, PDL reminds pharmacists to apply the same scrutiny and clinical review as for any other prescription.

PDL outlined some red flags for forged scripts (**PD** 17 Dec 2024), and has encouraged pharmacists to refresh their knowledge on these.

One such warning sign is that forged prescriptions often involve



large quantities of high-risk medicines in high doses.

If presented with a prescription, particularly those at high risk of abuse or diversion, PDL urges pharmacists to consider the indication for the medication; the dose and directions with regard to current therapeutic guidelines; patient history; and the appropriateness of the quantity ordered.

Given that anabolic steroids are not recorded on RTPM, PDL also strongly encourages pharmacists to consider consulting a patient's My Health Record.

See PDL's forged prescription red flags **HERE**. **KB**

## Lipid toolbox for primary care

A **NEW** cardiovascular disease (CVD) quality improvement program has been launched to support healthcare providers in managing patients' cholesterol more effectively.

The *LipidPlan in a Box* was developed by Novartis Australia in collaboration with a multidisciplinary team comprising primary care experts, specialists and patient advocacy groups, and aims to enhance the quality of care for patients with atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease.

Pharmacists play a vital and complementary role in cardiovascular risk management alongside other primary health practitioners, and *LipidPlan in a Box* supports practices in identifying and managing patients who are not at LDL-C target.

Pharmacists are also often the first to notice adherence challenges, side effects or opportunities for therapy optimisation, and are well placed to provide patient education, identify at-risk patients for GP follow-up and support lifestyle interventions.

Assoc Prof Karam Kostner from the University of Queensland and Director of Cardiology at Mater Hospital Brisbane, said that a strong foundation in primary care is essential for reducing the burden of CVD.

"In cardiology, we often see patients who arrive with advanced disease, where earlier intervention could have changed the trajectory of their condition," he said.

Learn more **HERE**.

## Immunisation Handbook RSV updates

**THE** Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has advised that the chapter on respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in the *Australian Immunisation Handbook* has been updated.

Changes relate to the age extension of Arexvy, with a conditional recommendation for eligible adults aged 50-59; clinical guidance on managing administration errors; and incorporation of updated advice on the post-vaccination risk of Guillain-Barre syndrome for

Abyryo and Arexvy.

Learn more about RSV and other updates **HERE**.

**MEANWHILE**, changes to the NIP childhood pneumococcal vaccination schedule will take effect from 01 Sep, including the introduction of Prevenar 20 to replace Prevenar 13 and Pneumovax 23.

Prevenar 20 covers more strains of the disease and requires fewer doses.

There will also be changes to the dosing regimen.



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## New Products

- Calcifediol (monohydrate) (Vistella)** is a precursor of the active form of vitamin D (1, 25-dihydroxycholecalciferol or calcitriol) and its pharmacodynamic effects are expected to be compatible with known biological roles of vitamin D. Vitamin D has two main forms: D2 (ergocalciferol) and D3 (cholecalciferol). Vitamin D3 is synthesised in the skin by exposure to sunlight (ultraviolet radiation) and is obtained from the diet. Vitamin D3 must undergo a two-step metabolic process to be active; the first step occurs in the microsomal fraction of the liver where Vitamin D is hydroxylated at position 25 (25-hydroxycholecalciferol or calcifediol); the second step takes place in the kidney where 1, 25-dihydroxycholecalciferol or calcitriol is formed due to the activity of enzyme 25-hydroxycholecalciferol 1-hydroxylase; conversion to 1, 25-dihydroxycholecalciferol is regulated by its own concentration, by parathyroid hormone and by serum calcium and phosphate concentration. 1, 25-dihydroxycholecalciferol is transported from the kidney to target tissues (intestine, bone and possibly kidney and parathyroid gland) by binding to specific plasma proteins. *Vistella is indicated for the treatment of vitamin D deficiency in adults, and maintenance treatment as required.* Vistella is contraindicated in patients with hypercalcaemia (serum calcium > 2.620 mmol/L) or hypercalciuria, calcium lithiasis, and hypervitaminosis D. Vistella capsules contain calcifediol 255 mcg and are available in packs of 5.
- Eflornithine (hydrochloride) (Ifinwil)** is an irreversible inhibitor of the enzyme ornithine decarboxylase, the first and rate-limiting enzyme in the biosynthesis of polyamines and a transcriptional target of MYCN. Polyamines are involved in differentiation and proliferation of mammalian cells and are important for neoplastic transformation. Inhibition of polyamine synthesis by eflornithine restored the balance of the LIN28/Let-7 metabolic pathway, which is involved in regulation of cancer stem cells and glycolytic metabolism, by decreasing expression of the oncogenic drivers MYCN and LIN28B in MYCN-amplified neuroblastoma. *In vitro*, eflornithine induced senescence and suppressed neurosphere formation in MYCN-amplified and MYCN non-amplified neuroblastoma cells, indicating a cytostatic effect. *Ifinwil is indicated for the treatment of adults and paediatric patients with high-risk neuroblastoma who have responded to prior multiagent, multimodality therapy.* Ifinwil tablets contain eflornithine 192 mg and are available in packs of 100.
- Foslevodopa and foscarnidopa (Vyalev)** is a combination of prodrugs of levodopa and carbidopa (ratio 20:1) in a solution for 24 hour/day continuous subcutaneous infusion. Foslevodopa and foscarnidopa are converted *in vivo* to levodopa and carbidopa. Levodopa relieves symptoms of Parkinson's disease following decarboxylation to dopamine in the brain. Carbidopa, which does not cross the blood-brain barrier, inhibits the extracerebral decarboxylation of levodopa to dopamine, which means that a larger amount of levodopa becomes available for transportation to the brain and transformation into dopamine. *Vyalev is indicated for the treatment of advanced idiopathic Parkinson's disease with severe motor fluctuations despite optimised alternative pharmacological treatment.* Vyalev is contraindicated in patients with hypersensitivity to levodopa and/or carbidopa; narrow-angle glaucoma; severe heart failure; acute stroke; severe cardiac arrhythmia; for concomitant use with non-selective monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitors and selective MAO type A inhibitors; in conditions in which medication with adrenergic activity are contraindicated, e.g. pheochromocytoma, hyperthyroidism and Cushing's syndrome; and in patients with suspicious undiagnosed skin lesions or a history of melanoma. Vyalev solution for subcutaneous infusion contains foslevodopa 2.4 g and foscarnidopa 120 mg per 10 mL and is available in packs of 7 vials.

## New Presentation

- Tacrolimus (monohydrate) (Azematop)** is now available as an ointment. Tacrolimus binds to a specific cytoplasmic immunophilin (FKBP12) and inhibits calcium-dependent signal transduction pathways in T cells, thereby preventing the transcription and synthesis of IL-2, IL-3, IL-4, IL-5 and other cytokines such as GM-CSF, TNF- $\alpha$  and IFN- $\gamma$ . *In vitro*, in Langerhans cells isolated from normal human skin, tacrolimus reduced the stimulatory activity towards T cells. Tacrolimus has also been shown to inhibit the release of inflammatory mediators from skin mast cells, basophils and eosinophils. In patients with atopic dermatitis, improvement of skin lesions during treatment with tacrolimus ointment was associated with reduced Fc receptor expression on Langerhans cells and a reduction of their hyperstimulatory activity towards T cells. Tacrolimus ointment does not affect collagen synthesis in humans. *Azematop is indicated in adults and adolescents (16 years of age and above) as treatment for moderate to severe flares of atopic dermatitis in patients who are not adequately responsive to or are intolerant of conventional therapies such as topical corticosteroids, and for prevention of flares and prolongation of flare-free intervals in patients experiencing a high frequency of disease exacerbations who have responded to tacrolimus treatment during flares.* Azematop is contraindicated in patients with hypersensitivity to macrolides. Azematop ointment contains tacrolimus 0.1% and is available in a 30 g tube.

## New Indications

- Asciminib (hydrochloride) (Scemblix)** is now also indicated for newly diagnosed Philadelphia chromosome-positive chronic myeloid leukaemia in chronic phase.
- Botulinum toxin type A (Botox)** is now indicated for the temporary improvement in the appearance of platysma continuous bands in healthy adults.
- Ipilimumab (rch) (Yervoy)** and **Nivolumab (rch) (Opdivo)** in combination, are now indicated for the first-line treatment of adult patients with unresectable or metastatic hepatocellular carcinoma.

- **Trastuzumab deruxtecan (Enhertu)** is now indicated (with provisional approval) for the treatment of adult patients with unresectable or metastatic HER2-positive (IHC3+) solid tumours who have received prior systemic treatment and who have no satisfactory alternative treatment options.
- *This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month.  
Before prescribing, always refer to the full product information.*