

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Varilrix vaccine

Varilrix vaccine, containing live attenuated varicella-zoster (Oka strain) virus, has been launched (GlaxoSmithKline); net price, 1 £29.37. Varilrix is indicated for active immunisation against varicella in healthy adults and adolescents (13 years) who have been found to be seronegative with respect to varicella-zoster virus and are, therefore, at risk of developing chickenpox. Two doses should be given with an interval of approximately eight weeks between doses (minimum interval of six weeks). The vaccine is not indicated for routine use in children. However, it may be administered to seronegative healthy children, aged one to 12 years, who are in close contact with people considered to be at high risk of severe varicella infections. A single dose should be given.

IVAX products

IVAX Pharmaceuticals has redesigned the packaging for its patient packs (as shown below).



Lagap products

Lagap Pharmaceuticals has launched the following products:

- Cetirizine dihydrochloride 10mg tablets, net price, 30 £8.73
- Co-zidocapt (captopril 25mg, hydrochlorothiazide 12.5mg), net price, 30 £12.05
- Co-zidocapt (captopril 50mg, hydrochlorothiazide 25mg), net price, 30 £15.15
- Warfarin 5mg tablets, net price, 500 £33.93
- Zolpidem tartrate tablets, net price, 5mg 28 £3.08, 10mg 28 £4.48

SPC CHANGES

Lustral tablets

The licensed indications for Lustral (sertraline hydrochloride) tablets have been extended (Pfizer). Lustral tablets are now additionally indicated for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in women and under the therapeutic

indications section it states: "Clinical trials in PTSD demonstrated efficacy in female patients but no evidence of efficacy was seen in males. Treatment with Lustral cannot normally therefore be recommended for male patients with PTSD. A therapeutic trial in males might on occasion be justified, but treatment should subsequently be withdrawn unless there is clear evidence of therapeutic benefit". Treatment should be initiated at a dose of 25mg daily, which should be increased to a dose of 50mg daily after one week. See SPC.

Rapamune preparations

The summary of product characteristics for Rapamune (sirolimus) tablets and oral solution has been updated (Wyeth Pharmaceuticals). The special warnings and precautions for use section states that during treatment with immunosuppressants, including Rapamune, vaccination may be less effective. The use of live vaccines should be avoided during treatment with Rapamune. "The incidence of adverse events may increase as the trough sirolimus level increases" has been added to the undesirable effects section, as have the following adverse events: peripheral oedema, increased serum glutamic oxalacetic transaminase, increased serum glutamic pyruvic transaminase, pneumonitis; pancytopenia. Hepatotoxicity has been reported. See SPC.

Schering products

The blister packaging for Logynon ED calender packs and Femodene ED packs has been changed so that the first tablet taken is always an active tablet (Schering Health Care). The summaries of product characteristics have been updated accordingly. See SPC.

APPOINTMENTS

Phoenix Cardiff

Phoenix Medical Supplies has appointed Sarah Lewis to the newly created post of customer services administrator at its Cardiff depot. Before this, customers in Cardiff were looked after by staff at the Wrexham depot.

Surelines Pharmaceutical Services

Philip Duncombe has been appointed national sales consultant to Surelines Pharmaceutical Services. Mr Duncombe was formerly national sales manager at Bayer.

Distance learning

Lindsay Taylor, MRPharmS, has been appointed course leader for

RECALLED PRODUCTS

Becotide, Becloforte and Ventide metered dose inhalers

Various batches of the following metered dose inhalers with expiry dates in 2004 and 2005 have been recalled as a precautionary measure (GlaxoSmithKline):

- Becotide (beclometasone dipropionate) 50µg, 100µg and 200µg/inhalation
- Becloforte (beclometasone dipropionate) 250µg/inhalation
- Ventide (salbutamol 100µg, beclometasone dipropionate 50µg/inhalation)

Quality control procedures have identified that a small number of inhalers in these batches may have quantities of active ingredients in them that may be above or below specification.

All the products are distributed in the livery of GlaxoSmithKline trading as Allen & Hanburys. Becotide and Becloforte metered dose inhalers are also distributed in Boots livery.

Recipients are requested to quarantine stock from these batches and return it to their supplier for credit or replacement. Further information can be obtained from Allen & Hanburys (tel 0800 221 441). GlaxoSmithKline is writing to doctors and pharmacists with further details of this recall.

postgraduate distance learning courses in pharmacy within the professional development institute of the school of applied sciences, De Montfort University, Leicester.

made by a number of large retail pharmacy chains, but exclude Boots The Chemists, which is classified under non-specialised retail stores. The figures are compiled by the Office for National Statistics.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NPA telephone numbers

The National Pharmaceutical Association has upgraded its switchboard. As a result, all its internal extension numbers have been made into four-digit numbers by adding the prefix 3 to them.

May retail sales figures

The value of retail sales for May 2002 under the classification of pharmaceutical sales, was up six points at 127.

The classification of the retail sale of pharmaceutical, medical, cosmetic and toilet goods excludes National Health Service receipts. The figures are based on returns

FUTURE EVENTS

E-pharmacy

Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Association and International e-Health Association one-day symposium on "E-pharmacy: its impact on international pharmacy practice", Barbican Centre, London, 18 September. Cost for CPA members £220.31, non-members £293.75. CPA members from developing countries will have their registration fees paid by the IeHA. Details from the Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Association, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN (website [www.rpsgb.org.uk/international/index.html](http://www.rpsgb.org.uk/international/index.html)).

*The Pharmaceutical Journal* is the official journal of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. Founded in 1841, it has been published weekly since 1870.

• **Editorial** Correspondence concerning editorial contents should be addressed to: The Editor, *The Pharmaceutical Journal*, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN (tel 020 7572 2420 or 020 7735 9141, fax 020 7572 2504, e-mail [editor@pharmj.org.uk](mailto:editor@pharmj.org.uk)).

• **Advertising** Correspondence concerning *Journal* advertisements should be addressed to: The Advertisement Manager, *The Pharmaceutical Journal*, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN (tel 020 7735 9141, fax 020 7572 2505, e-mail [advertdept@rpsgb.org.uk](mailto:advertdept@rpsgb.org.uk)).

• **Members** Members of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society should notify changes of address to the Registration Section, Royal Pharmaceutical Society, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN. Members resident overseas may have their copies sent on a priority basis on payment of an additional annual charge of £35.

• **Subscriptions** Annual subscription rates for non-members (2002): UK £130; EU £152; rest of world £175 (£210 with priority surcharge). Reduced rates are available for students in pharmaceutical disciplines resident in Great Britain (£35) and for members of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (£85). Single copy, UK £5.50 (EU and rest of world £6.50) inclusive of postage. Correspondence concerning subscriptions should be addressed to: The Pharmaceutical Press, PO Box 151, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 8QU, UK (tel 01491 829272, fax 01491 829292, e-mail [rpsgb@cabi.org](mailto:rpsgb@cabi.org)).

• Copyright © 2002 by *The Pharmaceutical Journal*. All reproduction, including photocopying, rights reserved. Average circulation, January to December 2001, 47,900: UK 42,752, overseas 5,148. Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations.

• Published by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. Printed in Great Britain by Polestar Colchester Ltd, a member of the Polestar Group. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.

