

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Vfend tablets and infusion
COMPOSITION: Voriconazole tablets 50mg and 200mg, infusion 200mg (10mg/ml).

PRESENTATION: Tablets; powder for solution for infusion.

CLASS: Antifungal.

INDICATIONS: Treatment of invasive aspergillosis, fluconazole-resistant serious invasive *Candida* infections (including *C. krusei*), serious fungal infections caused by *Scedosporium* spp and *Fusarium* spp. Voriconazole should be administered primarily to immunocompromised patients with progressive, possibly life-threatening infections.

DOSE: Loading dose (every 12 hours for the first 24 hours), intravenously 6mg/kg, orally 400mg for patients 40kg and over and 200mg for patients less than 40kg. Maintenance dose (after first 24 hours), intravenously 4mg/kg twice daily, orally 200mg twice daily for patients 40kg and over and 100mg twice daily for patients under 40kg. See SPC for dose adjustments.

MAJOR CAUTIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS: Voriconazole is not recommended in children under 2 years of age. Co-administration of voriconazole with any of the following drugs is contraindicated: Terfenadine, astemizole, cisapride, pimozone, quinidine, rifampicin, carbamazepine, ergotamine, dihydroergotamine, phenobarbital, and sirolimus. Concomitant use of voriconazole with phenytoin, and voriconazole with rifabutin should be avoided unless the benefit outweighs the risk. Voriconazole must not be used during pregnancy unless the benefit to the mother clearly outweighs the potential risk to the foetus. Breast-feeding must be stopped on initiation of treatment with voriconazole.

SIDE EFFECTS: Very common (> 10 per cent) undesirable effects are fever, headache, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, peripheral oedema, rash and visual disturbances.

LEGAL CATEGORY: POM.

NET PRICE: Tablets 50mg 28 £227.84, 200mg 28 £911.36; vials 1 £77.14.

CONTACT DETAILS: Pfizer, Walton Oaks, Dorking Road, Tadworth, Surrey KT20 7NS. Tel 01737 331535, fax 01737 332507. See SPC for further details.

Faulding products

Faulding Pharmaceuticals has launched the following products:

- Mitoxantrone sterile concentrate 20mg/10ml; net price, 1 vial £100
- Fluorouracil injection 1g/20ml; net price, 5 vials £64

Pulmicort NebuChamber
Packs of pulmicort (budesonide) 200µg inhalers containing a Nebu-Chamber, a small volume spacer are now available (AstraZeneca).

SUPPLY PROBLEMS

Kloref tablets

Kloref tablets, pack size 50, are back in stock (Alpharma). They are available in Cox Pharmaceuticals livery.

FUTURE EVENTS

Palliative care

St Christopher's Hospice study day for palliative care pharmacists, St Christopher's Hospice, Sydenham, London SE26, 12 September. Details from Tracey Saunders on 020 8768 4656 (e-mail education@stchristophers.org.uk).

E-pharmacy

International e-Health Association and Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Association one-day symposium on "E-pharmacy: its impact on pharmacy practice", Barbican Centre, London, 18 September. Cost for pharmacists £105.75. Details from the Commonwealth Pharmaceutical Association, 1 Lambeth High Street, London SE1 7JN (website www.rpsgb.org.uk/international/index.html).

Medicines management

Pharmaceutical Marketing Society meeting on "Medicines management", Lundbeck, Caldecotte, Milton Keynes, 25 September, 6.30 for 7pm. Cost £47 for members, £94 for non-members. Details from Vivien Bennett, PM Society, PO Box 200, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 3FA (tel 01403 264898).

Bolton branch dinner

Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Bolton branch annual professional dinner, New Pack Horse Hotel, Bolton, 9 October, 7.30 for 8pm. Black tie. Cost £25 per ticket. Details from Keith Williams, 59 Limefield Road, Smithills, Bolton BL1 2LA (tel 01204 842314).

IT in the NHS

Guild of Healthcare Pharmacists information technology interest group seminar on "Delivering 21st century IT in the National Health Service", Bethel Convention Centre, West Bromwich, 10 October. Cost £100 for members, £120 for non-members working in the NHS, £140 for others. A discount of £35 is available for bookings made via the guild's website (www.gfp.org.uk). Details from Raj Gokani on 01865 228483 (e-mail raj@gokani.org).

Pharmacist ordained by Church of Wales



Philip Huw Davies, MRPharmS, has been ordained as a minister in the Church of Wales following two years' theological training. He will serve as a deacon for one year, then curate for two or three years before becoming a vicar or priest-in-charge. He is currently working in the parish of Maesteg, in south Wales. Mr Davies was formerly a clinical pharmacist at Prince Charles Hospital, Merthyr Tydfil, where he specialised in paediatric medicine and mental health pharmacy. The photograph shows Mr Davies (left) at his ordination with the Bishop of Llandaff, Dr Barry Morgan.

DURG meeting move

The United Kingdom Drug Utilisation Review Group is to hold its annual scientific meeting in Manchester in January 2003 and not in London as originally planned. Details from Barbara Sandland on 01782 584131.

and hydrochlorothiazide) tablets has been transferred to Bristol-Myers Squibb Pharmaceuticals Ltd. Medical information queries can be made on 0800 731 1736.

CORRECTIONS

Stockport PCT

Hazel Evans is a community pharmacy development facilitator at Stockport Primary Care Trust, not pharmaceutical adviser (P7, 31 August, p274).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moduretic transfer

Responsibility for Moduret 25 and Moduretic (amiloride hydrochloride

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