

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Lignocaine gel

Lignocaine gel 1 per cent and 2 per cent have been launched (APS/BERK); net price, 12 x 15ml £18. The company has also launched lignocaine antiseptic 1 per cent and 2 per cent, net price, 12 x 15ml £18.

Nabilone capsules

Nabilone capsules 500µg and 2mg have been launched (Cambridge Laboratories) and are available on a named patient basis. Net price, 500µg 20 £68.64, 2mg 20 £228.80. Ordering information is available from the company's customer services department (tel 0191 2969 300).

Celiprolol tablets

Celiprolol tablets 200mg have been launched (Alpharma); net price, 200mg 28 £14.61.

SPC CHANGES

Lustral SPC update

The summary of product characteristics for Lustral (sertraline) has been updated (Pfizer). Concomitant use in patients taking pimozide (Orap) is now contraindicated. The section on interactions with other medicinal products now states that increased pimozide levels have been shown when sertraline is co-administered.

Lioresal intrathecal administration

The summary of product characteristics for Lioresal (baclofen) intrathecal formulation has been updated (Novartis). It now states that only physicians with the necessary knowledge and experience should undertake intrathecal administration through an implanted delivery system. The updated SPC also contains advice about pump implantation and treatment withdrawal.

New indication for Actilyse

The summary of product characteristics for Actilyse (alteplase) has been updated (Boehringer Ingelheim) to include a new indication for fibrinolytic treatment of ischaemic stroke. See SPC for details.

DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

Microgynon clinic pack

Microgynon 30 (levonorgestrel 150µg, ethinylestradiol 30µg) clinic packs (50 x 21 tablets) are expected to be discontinued in November

(Schering Health). Microgynon 30 remains available in single 21-tablet packs.

Novo Nordisk

- NovoRapid Novolet (insulin aspart in an injecting device which allows a two-unit dosage adjustment) will no longer be available after November 2004. However, patients using the NovoRapid Novolet device can be switched to the Novorapid Flexpen, which contains the same insulin and allows a one-unit dosage adjustment.
- Human Mixtard 50 (biphasic insulin aspart), 10ml vial will no longer be available after November 2004. Human Mixtard 50 pens and 3ml penfill cartridges will remain available.

DRUG TARIFF UPDATES

Clomipramine endorsement

The Department of Health and the National Assembly for Wales have agreed to allow "No cheaper stock available" (NCSO) endorsements for clomipramine capsules 25mg BP for July prescriptions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April retail sales figures

The value of retail sales for April 2003, under the classification of pharmaceutical sales, was up two points at 129.

The classification of the retail sale of pharmaceutical, medical, cosmetic and toilet goods excludes National Health Service receipts. The figures are based on returns made by a number of large retail pharmacy chains, but exclude Boots The Chemists Ltd, which is classified under non-specialised retail stores. The figures are compiled by the Office for National Statistics.

APPOINTMENTS

BPA

Peter Walker has been appointed chief executive officer of the Boots Pharmacists' Association. He succeeds Charles Smallwood, who has retired. He was previously the association chairman.

Numark Trading Ltd

Simon Colebeck has been appointed managing director of Numark Trading Ltd, the joint venture between Phoenix Medical Supplies and Numark Plc. Mr Colebeck was formerly with SmithKline Beecham, and is currently sales director at Crookes Healthcare.

Superdrug preregistration trainee of the year



Shireen Khan is this year's Superdrug preregistration trainee of the year. The photograph shows Ms Khan being presented her award by David Clark, Superdrug's head of pharmacy. Ms Khan, from Leicester, has decided on a career at Superdrug. In second place was Margaret Cullen from Brighton and third place was awarded to Tasleem Raza from Stockport.

United Co-op

United Co-op Healthcare Group has appointed Steve Coleman as pharmacy retail operations manager. He will be responsible for developing the performance of more than 130 pharmacies in the north of England and the Midlands. He was previously pharmacy services manager at Tesco.

Leicester school of pharmacy

Dr Larry Goodyer, MRPharmS, has been appointed head of the Leicester school of pharmacy at De Montfort University. The school forms part of a new faculty of health and life sciences, which also includes the schools of health and applied social

studies and nursing and midwifery.

Dr Goodyer was formerly a senior lecturer in clinical pharmacy and the head of the pharmacy practice group at King's College London.

ABOUT PEOPLE

Channel swim

Miriam Armstrong, chief executive of PharmacyHealthLink, will swim the English Channel on 19-20 July as part of a relay team from the London surf club, raising money for the mental health charity MIND. The swim is expected to take around 17 hours. For more information and pledges at www.surfersformind.co.uk.

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