

DRUG ALERT

Methotrexate

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has advised caution in use for the following batches of methotrexate injection and tablets in Cyanamid livery because changes to the summary of product characteristics have not been incorporated into the packaging and labels.

Methotrexate injection

Presentation	Batch number	Expiry date
Injection 50mg/2ml	A7WM/11	28/11/2004
Injection 200mg/8ml	A8EZ/11	28/05/2005
Solution 500mg/20ml	K386	31/03/2005
Solution 1g/40ml	K370	31/03/2005
Solution 5g/200ml	K384	31/03/2005

Methotrexate tablets 2.5mg

Batch number	Expiry date
K535B	30/04/2008
K634A	30/04/2008

Stock with compliant packaging will be available by the end of October. See www.mhra.gov.uk for the additional label and packaging information.

Dispensing methotrexate, p562

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Seroquel tablets

Seroquel (quetiapine) tablets 300mg have been launched (AstraZeneca); net price, 60 £170.

Zamadol Melt

Zamadol (tramadol hydrochloride) Melt orodispersible tablets have been launched (Viartis); net price, 50mg 100 £12.77.

Co-proxamol tablets

Co-proxamol tablets (dextropropoxyphene hydrochloride 32.5mg, paracetamol 325mg) have been placed on the market by Almus Pharmaceuticals; net price, 100 £1.20.

Duac Once Daily Gel

Stiefel Laboratories has launched Duac Once Daily Gel (clindamycin phosphate 1.28 per cent and hydroxy benzoyl peroxide 6.67 per cent w/w) for the treatment of mild to moderate acne vulgaris; net price, 25g £9.95.

Mysoline tablets

AstraZeneca has announced that it will be extending the supply of Mysoline (primidone) tablets 250mg within the United Kingdom until the end of 2006.

SPC CHANGES

Pariet tablets

The summary of product characteristics for Pariet (rabeprazole) has been updated (Eisai). A potential interaction with digoxin has been removed as the variation in blood level changes were thought to be within normal bioequivalence limits. Interstitial nephritis has been added to the undesirable effects section. See SPC for full details.

Glivec capsules

The summary of product characteristics for Glivec (imatinib mesylate) capsules has been updated (Novartis). The cautions and drug interactions statements for paracetamol have been removed and a small number of updates have been made to the undesirable effects section. See SPC for full details.

DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

Novo Nordisk Penfills

All Novo Nordisk 1.5ml Penfill insulin cartridges are being discontinued. Actrapid 1.5ml, Insulatard 1.5ml, and Mixtard 30 1.5ml Penfill cartridges are unavailable immediately. Mixtard 10, 20, 40 and 50 1.5ml Penfill cartridges will continue to be supplied until the end of the year. All of these insulins remain available in the 3ml Penfill cartridge which requires a Novo Nordisk 3ml delivery device. Further details from Novo Nordisk Customer Care on 0845 600 5055.

SUPPLY PROBLEMS

Apstil tablets

Apstil (diethylstilbestrol) tablets 1mg and 5mg will be unavailable until the first quarter of 2004 (APS Berk Pharmaceuticals). For availability enquiries contact APS customer liaison department on 0800 590 502. For other enquiries contact APS medical information on 01323 501111.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Murine eye drops

Responsibility for Murine (naphazoline hydrochloride 0.012 per cent) eye drops has been transferred from

Abbott Laboratories to Prestige Brands. For enquiries contact Ceuta Healthcare on 01202 780558 or Prestige Brands on 01753 644478.

COUNTER MEDICINES

Cetraben bath additive

Sankyo Pharma has launched Cetraben Emollient Bath Additive (light liquid paraffin and medium chain triglycerides). Net price, 500ml £5.25. Recommended retail price £9.55.

FUTURE EVENTS

Aspirin and cancer

Aspirin Foundation and Cancer Research UK joint conference on "Aspirin in the prevention of cancer", Great Hall, St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, 10 November. Details from the secretariat on 01305 871055 (e-mail aspirin@healthcom.eu.com, website www.aspirin-foundation.com).

Clinical governance

East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey Primary Care Trust evening event on "Clinical governance and medicines management strategy" for community pharmacists including managers, locums, part-time staff and preregistration trainees, Leatherhead golf club, Surrey, 24 November. Details from Gabrielle Clezy on 01372 227362 (e-mail gabrielle.clezy@eeandms-pct.nhs.uk).

Clinical pharmacology

Clinical pharmacology section of the British Pharmacological Society symposium on "Uses of medicines: regulation and clinical pharmacology in the 21st century", Guy's, King's and St Thomas' medical school, London, 16 December.

Details from the British Pharmacological Society office on 020 7417 0383 (e-mail yn@bps.ac.uk), website www.bps.ac.uk.

Electronic prescribing

British Journal of Healthcare Computing conference on electronic prescribing and medicines management, entitled "Advances in reshaping pharmacy services fit for the 21st century", Metropole Hotel, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, 4 December. Cost £276.13. Details from BJHC events on 01932 821723 (e-mail events@bjhcltd.demon.co.uk).

ANONYMOUS CALLER

Pharmacists are advised not to give callers details about the number of staff they employ, the hours they work, etc, unless they know exactly why the information is being sought. There is an unauthorised anonymous caller purporting to act on behalf of *The Pharmaceutical Journal* ringing independent pharmacists asking for such information at the moment.

CORRECTIONS

Dr Mo Aslam memorial

The memorial evening for Dr Mo Aslam will be held at the University of Nottingham on 22 October, not as *The Journal* was informed last week (p489).

Rachel Elliott

The article in last week's *Journal* entitled "Can Britain and the United States learn anything from each other?" was co-written by Rachel Elliott, not as stated (p508).

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