

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Gonapeptyl Depot

Ferring has launched Gonapeptyl Depot (triptorelin [as acetate]) pre-filled syringes containing 3.75mg of the gonadotrophin analogue triptorelin to be suspended in 1ml suspension agent. Net price; 1 syringe, £105.05. Legal category: POM.

Ramipril capsules

Ramipril capsules are now available from:

■ APS/Berk; net price, 1.25mg 28 £5.04, 2.5mg 28 £7.13, 5mg 28 £9.94, 10mg 28 £13.53.

■ Sandoz; net price, 1.25mg 28 £5.30, 2.5mg 28 £7.51, 5mg 28 £10.46, 10mg 28 £14.24. Initial packaging consists of four blister strips of seven tablets, which will subsequently be changed to two strips of 14 capsules.

■ Genus Pharmaceuticals; net price, 2.5mg 28 £7.51, 5mg 28 £10.46, 10mg 28 £14.24.

Ramipril tablets

Ramipril tablets are now available from APS/Berk; net price, 1.25mg 28 £5.04, 2.5mg 28 £7.13, 5mg 28 £9.94, 10mg 28 £13.53.

SPC CHANGES

Zocor and myopathy

The summary of product characteristics for Zocor (simvastatin) now states that the risk of myopathy/rhabdomyolysis is increased by concomitant administration of amiodarone or verapamil with higher doses of simvastatin (Merck Sharp & Dohme). It states that in patients taking amiodarone or verapamil concomitantly with simvastatin, the dose of simvastatin should not exceed 20mg a day unless the clinical benefit is likely to outweigh the increased risk of myopathy. The SPC now also states that patients on diltiazem treated concomitantly with simvastatin 80mg have a slightly increased risk of myopathy. See SPC.

Prozac licence

The summary of product characteristics for Prozac (fluoxetine hydrochloride) has been revised (Eli Lilly). Prozac is no longer licensed for the treatment of premenstrual dysphoric disorder. The dose range for depression has been extended from a starting dose of 20mg to up to 60mg a day. The SPC now

states that fluoxetine can be used during pregnancy, but caution should be exercised since adverse effects have been reported in neonates. Further information has been included about fluoxetine dosing in obsessive-compulsive disorder and the elderly, and about use of monoamine oxidase inhibitors with fluoxetine. Warnings have been added about electroconvulsive therapy, St John's wort and serotonin syndrome. See SPC.

Seroquel indication

Seroquel tablets (quetiapine) are now indicated for the treatment of manic episodes associated with bipolar disorder either as monotherapy or adjunct therapy (AstraZeneca). The total daily dose for the first four days of therapy is 100mg on day one, increasing by 100mg a day to 400mg on day four. Further dosage adjustments up to 800mg per day by day six should be in increments of no greater than 200mg per day. The usual effective dose is in the range of 400 to 800mg per day. A section on acute withdrawal reactions has also been added to the SPC and the pharmacokinetics and interactions sections have been updated. See SPC.

DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

Estrapak

Estrapak (estradiol), containing hormone replacement patches and tablets, has been discontinued (Novartis).

Lemsip Pharmacy Non-Decongestant

Lemsip Pharmacy Non-Decongestant Formula sachets (paracetamol) are being discontinued with immediate effect (Reckitt Benckiser).

SUPPLY PROBLEMS

Temazepam tablets

Alpharma packs of temazepam tablets 10mg x 28 and 20mg x 28 are currently out of stock. Bulk packs of 10mg x 500 and 20mg x 250 remain available.

Andropatch patches

There is currently a shortage of Andropatch (testosterone) transdermal patches 2.5mg and 5mg (GlaxoSmithKline). Local service providers have a small stock of both strength patches, and the UK distribution centre has a small stock of the 5mg patches. Stock for both strength patches will be

available towards the end of February. Details from GSK on 0800 221 441.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lamisil tablets

The presentation of Lamisil tablets (terbinafine) has changed. The tablets are now scored and coded ST on one side (Novartis).

Bisodol brand

Responsibility for the Bisodol brand (formerly Wyeth Consumer Healthcare) has been handed over to Forest Laboratories (tel 01322 550550). Wyeth Consumer Healthcare will continue to accept, process and deliver Bisodol orders on behalf of Forest Laboratories until 2 February.

ABOUT PEOPLE

Thrombosis group

Margaret Munro, MRPharmS, has been appointed secretary of Clinical Leaders of Thrombosis (CLOT), a multidisciplinary special interest group in anticoagulation. Mrs Munro is anticoagulant pharmacist at Bristol Royal Infirmary.

APPOINTMENTS

Lloydspharmacy

Lloydspharmacy IT director Gary Feary has been appointed to the company's board of directors. Mr Feary joined the Celesio group in October 2001 and transferred from Gehis to Lloydspharmacy in May 2002. His immediate responsibility for IT remains the same.

AWARDS

Schering award

Nominations are being sought for the 2003 Schering award, presented to a pharmacist who has made an outstanding contribution to pharmacy practice. Nominations should be made in writing to Ian Simpson, Chief Executive, College of Pharmacy Practice, 28 Warwick Row, Coventry, CV1 1EY. Deadline 30 January. Details on 024 7622 1359 (e-mail ian@collpharm.org.uk).

Patient health care award

IMS and the International Pharmaceutical Federation community pharmacy section are seeking submissions of previously unpublished work from students, researchers or health care

professionals for an award on the topic "How can pharmacists be fully engaged in patient oriented health care?" covering aspects of management, change strategy and training. First prize €8,000, four second prizes of €4,000. Deadline 31 December 2004. Details at www.imshealth.com/prize or www.fip.org.

RESOURCES

CFC-free transition pack

Boehringer Ingelheim has launched a resource pack for health professionals who are overseeing the transition of patients from anticholinergic inhalers containing chlorofluorocarbons to CFC-free alternatives. The pack includes a guide to alternative treatments, a wallchart on the change over, and a CD-ROM of patient information letter templates. The pack is available free from the company's respiratory marketing department on 01344 741210.



NiQuitin CQ materials

GlaxoSmithKline is offering pharmacies a range of NiQuitin CQ materials designed to promote sales of smoking cessation products for No Smoking Day (10 March). These include window and counter display kits, badges, pens and balloons and are available from the GSK telephone account team on 0845 762 6637.

FUTURE EVENTS

Women in public life

National Association of Women Pharmacists conference entitled "Women in public life", addressing the issue of how women can get appointed to boards that require lay or expert members. Soroptomist Club, 63 Bayswater Road, London, 17 February, cost £30 for members, £35 for non-members. Non-pharmacist friends welcome. Some accommodation available. Details from Christine Heading on 01895 639852 (e-mail enquiries@nawp.org.uk).

Correction

The prices of Sandoz ramipril capsules, packs of 28, are as follows and not as the company originally told *The Journal*; 1.25mg £5.28, 2.5mg £7.49, 5mg £10.44, 10mg £14.22.