

## PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

### Faslodex

COMPOSITION: Fulvestrant 250mg in 5ml.

PRESENTATION: Solution for injection in 5ml pre-filled syringe. ACTION: Oestrogen receptor antagonist.

INDICATIONS: Treatment of postmenopausal women with oestrogen receptor-positive, locally advanced or metastatic breast cancer for disease relapse on, or after, adjuvant anti-oestrogen therapy or disease progression on therapy with an anti-oestrogen.

DOSAGE: 250mg at monthly intervals.

PRECAUTIONS: Use with caution in patients with mild to moderate hepatic impairment, severe renal impairment, bleeding diatheses, thrombocytopenia or those taking anticoagulant treatment. See SPC. CONTRAINDICATIONS: Pregnancy or breast-feeding, severe hepatic impairment, hypersensitivity to the drug or excipients.

SIDE EFFECTS: Include hot flushes, nausea and injection site reactions. NET PRICE: One pre-filled syringe £348.27.

CONTACT DETAILS: Astra Zeneca UK, Horizon Place, 600 Capability Green, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 3LU (tel 01582 836 000).



### Somavert

COMPOSITION: Pegvisomant. PRESENTATION: Powder and solvent for solution for injection. ACTION: Growth hormone receptor antagonist.

INDICATIONS: Treatment of patients with acromegaly who have had an inadequate response to surgery and/or radiation therapy and in whom an appropriate medical treatment with somatostatin analogues did not normalise IGF-I concentrations or was not tolerated.

DOSAGE: A loading dose of 80mg should be administered subcutaneously under medical supervision. A subcutaneous injection of Somavert 10mg reconstituted in 1ml of water for injections should then be administered once daily. Dose adjustments should be based on serum IGF-I levels. Maximum

dose should not exceed 30mg per day. See SPC.

PRECAUTIONS: Treatment should be initiated under the supervision of a physician experienced in the treatment of acromegaly. Serum IGF-I concentrations should be measured every four to six weeks. SIDE EFFECTS: Include injection site reactions, sweating, headache and asthenia.

NET PRICE: 30 vials, 10mg £1,500, 15mg £2,250, 20mg £3,000. One vial, 20mg £100.

This product is for home delivery and will be distributed on behalf of Pfizer by Healthcare at Home (tel 0870 366 4640).

CONTACT DETAILS: Pfizer, Walton Oaks, Dorking Road, Tadworth, Surrey KT20 7NS (tel 01304 616161).

### Hydroxocobalamin

Hydroxocobalamin solution for injection 1mg in 1ml is now available from Auden McKenzie; net price, 5 ampoules £12.31.



### Carvedilol tablets

Carvedilol tablets are now available from Pliva Pharma in packs of 28; net price, 3.125mg £8.13, 6.25mg £9.03, 12.5mg £10.04. Carvedilol tablets 3.125mg are also available from Alpharma; net price, 28 £8.14.

## DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

### Vancocin

Vancocin (vancomycin hydrochloride) capsules 250mg will be discontinued after 1 July (Lilly). Vancocin capsules 125mg and Vancocin injection will remain available.

### Boehringer respiratory range

The following products are being discontinued by Boehringer Ingelheim: Oxivent inhaler (oxitropium bromide), Oxivent Autohaler (oxitropium bromide), Atrovent Forte (ipratropium bromide), Atrovent Autohaler (ipratropium bromide), Alupent (orciprenaline sulphate) tablets. The company expects these products to be unavailable after 31 May.

## SUPPLY ISSUES

### Triclofos elixir

Triclofos elixir (triclofos sodium 500mg in 5ml) 300ml is now back in stock and available from all UK mainline wholesalers (Celltech).

## PRODUCTS MISCELLANY

### Antepsin tablets

Antepsin (sucralfate) tablets 1g will come in packs of 50 from mid-June; net price, £4.37 (Chugai). The 100 tablet packs will be discontinued at this time, when stocks are exhausted.

### Algesal ownership

Algesal (diethylamine salicylate), formerly a Solvay Healthcare product, is now under the ownership of Zeroderma. The product will continue to be available through the usual wholesalers.

### Reminyl responsibility

Shire has assumed sole sales and marketing responsibility for Reminyl (galantamine hydrobromide). The supply, availability and price of Reminyl will remain the same.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### National business awards

Among the regional finalists for this year's national business awards are: in the North East, The Specials Laboratory (growth strategy of the year) and Fiona Cruikshank of The Specials Laboratory (entrepreneur of the year); in Wales and West country, Ceuta Healthcare (outstanding people development); in the South East, Sinclair Pharma (business innovation of the year and small to medium sized business award). The regional winners will be announced in July, and will go forward to the national awards which will take place in London in November.

## APPOINTMENTS

### NHS services at the NPA

Karen Homan, MRPharmS, has been appointed head of NHS service development at the National Pharmaceutical Association. Mrs Homan was previously a clinical effectiveness consultant at Pfizer, and was formerly pharmaceutical adviser to Bedfordshire Health Authority and the Eastern regional office.

## WANTS

### Equipment available

William Ransom is moving location at the end of the year and a quantity of copper plant is no longer required. This includes extraction equipment capable of holding five tons of crude drug, and 20 litre evaporating pans and mixing vessels. Michael Ransom would like to hear from anybody who can recommend a home for this equipment, some of which is over 100 years old and would otherwise be disposed of as scrap metal. He can be contacted at William Ransom & Son PLC, 104 Bancroft, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 1LY.

## FUTURE EVENTS

### Artificial intelligence

Institute of Pharmaceutical Innovation workshop on using artificial intelligence techniques to support new product development and processing, entitled "Recipes for success", Institute of Pharmaceutical Innovation, University of Bradford, 15 June. Cost £411.25. Details at [www.ipi.brad.ac.uk/ai.php](http://www.ipi.brad.ac.uk/ai.php). Registration on 01274 233137 (quoting "AI workshop").

### Antimicrobial therapy

Ocean Education and Communication conference entitled "Antimicrobial therapeutic update 2004", Royal Pharmaceutical Society, London, 18 June. Cost health care professionals £111.63 (if booked before 1 June), industry delegates £293.75. E-mail [cco@onetel.net.uk](mailto:cco@onetel.net.uk).

### Industry and the NHS

Management Forum meeting entitled "Changes in the NHS — implications for the pharmaceutical industry", Harrington Hall Hotel, London, 6 July, cost £587.50. Details and registration at [www.management-forum.co.uk](http://www.management-forum.co.uk) (e-mail [registrations@management-forum.co.uk](mailto:registrations@management-forum.co.uk)).

### Lipids and health

International Society for the Study of Fatty Acids and Lipids congress, on the theme "Lipids as determinants of cell function and health", The Brighton Centre, Brighton, Sussex, 27 June–1 July. Cost members £375, non members £425, discounted day rates available. Details from Natasha Dougall on 01922 457984, or at [www.issfal.org.uk](http://www.issfal.org.uk).