

RECALLED PRODUCTS

Durogesic transdermal patches

A number of batches of Durogesic (fentanyl) transdermal patches 50µg/h, 75µg/h and 100µg/h are being recalled because stability samples have failed to meet specifications for ethanol content at 12 months, which may reduce transdermal delivery of the drug (Janssen-Cilag). This follows a recall in May (*PJ*, 29 May, p667) when batches not immediately affected continued to be supplied. These remaining batches are now being recalled. The batch numbers affected are listed at www.mhra.gov.uk. Any remaining stock of these batches should be quarantined and returned to suppliers for credit or replacement. The company says there is no expected imminent patient safety risk. Further details from Janssen-Cilag customer services on 0800 7315550. For medical queries contact 0800 7318450. Suppliers of parallel imported products are also listed on the website and customers are asked to contact them directly, and not Janssen-Cilag.

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Amlodipine

Amlodipine tablets are now available from Alpharma in Arrow livery; net price, 5mg 28 £11.67, 10mg 28 £17.27.

Calmurid HC

Calmurid HC (hydrocortisone, urea and lactic acid) cream is now available in a 50g pack; net price, £4.67 (Galderma). The 100g pack will be discontinued when current stocks are exhausted. The 30g pack remains available.

SPC CHANGES

MabThera

MabThera (rituximab) is now additionally indicated for the treatment of previously untreated patients with stage III-IV follicular lymphoma in combination with CVP chemotherapy (Roche). The recommended dose for this indication is 375 mg/m² body surface area for eight cycles (21 days/cycle), administered on day 1 of each chemotherapy cycle after IV administration of the corticosteroid component of CVP. The summary of product characteristics has been updated accordingly. Aplastic anaemia has been added as a very rare serious adverse reaction observed during post-marketing surveillance of the product. See SPC.

DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

Stiedex

Stiedex (desoximetasone) LP oily cream 30g is being discontinued (Stiefel). The company expects stocks to be exhausted in October. The 100g pack was discontinued in June. Stiedex lotion has also been discontinued.

SUPPLY ISSUES

Decadron

Merck Sharp & Dohme says that there is likely to be a shortage of Decadron (dexamethasone) tablets 0.5mg since production of this product has currently ceased and is undergoing review. The company expects supplies to remain available until late September. Details of alternative supplies from MSD on 01992 467272.

AmBisome

Gilead Sciences says that despite supply problems with amphotericin B, supplies of AmBisome (liposomal amphotericin B) are unaffected and remain available.

COUNTER PRODUCTS

Dermol

Dermol (liquid paraffin 10 per cent, isopropyl myristate 10 per cent, benzalkonium chloride 0.1 per cent and chlorhexidine dihydrochloride 0.1 per cent) cream is now available from Dermal Laboratories. Recommended retail price, 500g squeezable bottle £13.14, 100g tube £5.68. Legal category: P.

Lemsip

Reckitt Benckiser has launched:

■ Lemsip Cold & Flu Sinus 12 hr Ibuprofen + Pseudoephedrine (ibuprofen 300mg and pseudoephedrine hydrochloride 45mg) capsules; recommended retail price, 10 £3.99. Legal category: P

■ Lemsip Max Sinus All Night Decongestant (oxymetazoline hydrochloride 0.05 per cent w/v) spray; recommended retail price, 15ml £3.49. Legal category: GSL

Tesco preregistration trainee of the year



Viren Bhatia has been named Tesco preregistration trainee of the year. Mr Bhatia, who trained at the Trent Vale store in Stoke, was awarded £200 in travel vouchers. He has accepted a position at Tesco pharmacy in Kingston, Milton Keynes. The award was sponsored by Reckitt Benckiser and Crookes Healthcare. Pictured (left to right) are Dan Robinson, national account manager, Crookes Healthcare, Karen Marsden, preregistration controller, Tesco, Viren Bhatia, Penny Beck, pharmacy superintendent, Tesco, and Mel Smith, global professional relations manager, Reckitt Benckiser.

DRUG TARIFF UPDATES

Scottish Tariff shortages

The Scottish Pharmaceutical General Council has announced that oxybutinin tablets 2.5mg should be classed as a shortage for July.

ABOUT PEOPLE

Rufus A. Lyman award

Larry Goodyer, MRPharmS, head of Leicester school of pharmacy, and Anum Chaikulwatana, instructor at the Ubon Ratchathani University faculty of pharmaceutical sciences, Thailand, have been awarded the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy Rufus A. Lyman award for their paper on "Evaluation of a multimedia case-history simulation program for pharmacy students".

RESOURCES

Teenage acne

Schwarz Pharma has launched a self-help booklet for teenagers with acne. The booklet, endorsed by the Acne Support Group, explains the causes of acne, where to go for help and the treatment options available. Pharmacists can order free copies on 01494 797500.

Aventis website

Aventis has updated its website to include a password protected area for health care professionals containing Aventis product information, links to patient

support groups, regulatory sites and other resources. It can be accessed at www.aventis.co.uk.

FUTURE EVENTS

Critical Care

United Kingdom Clinical Pharmacy Association Critical Care Pharmacists Group study day, Wallacespace training centre, Dryden Street, London, 14 September. Cost members £99, non-members £155. Details and booking at www.ukcpa.org.

Palliative care

Palliative care pharmacists networking day, St Christopher's Hospice education centre, Sydenham, London, 17 September. Cost £80. Organised by Margaret Gibbs, senior pharmacist at the hospice. Topics include interface issues between community and hospice, palliative care for non-cancer patients, new treatments for bone pain and herbal medicines in cancer and palliative care. Details on 020 8768 4656 (e-mail education@stchristophers.org.uk).

CORRECTIONS

Counterfeit Cialis tablets

The batch numbers of counterfeit Cialis (tadalafil) tablets that have been recalled are A031410 and A041410, not as stated in the news story last week (p277). Pharmacists should contact their wholesalers directly for exchange, not Lilly ICOS.