

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Disodium pamidronate

Disodium pamidronate concentrate solution 3mg/ml is now available from Medac. Net price, 15mg £27.50, 30mg £55, 60mg £110, 90mg £165. Legal category: POM.

Taxol

Taxol (paclitaxel) 6mg/ml concentrate for solution for infusion is now available as a 25ml vial (150mg paclitaxel) (Bristol-Myers Squibb). Net price, 1 vial £561. Legal category: POM

Zaponex

Zaponex (clozapine) tablets are now available from IVAX. Net price, 84 tablets 25mg £36.97, 100mg £147.84. Legal category: POM. A patient monitoring system (Zaponex Treatment Access System) has been developed for the product. Details on 08705 020 304.



SPC CHANGES

Mirena

Mirena intrauterine system (levonorgestrel) is now additionally indicated for protection from endometrial hyperplasia during oestrogen replacement therapy (Schering Health Care). When being used for this indication Mirena can be inserted at any time in an amenorrhoeic woman, or during the last days of menstruation or withdrawal bleeding. Endometrial pathology should be excluded before insertion. In this indication the system should be removed after four years since clinical data beyond this time are limited. Mirena can be used in combination with oral or transdermal oestrogen preparations without progestogens. The summary of product characteristics states that the efficacy of Mirena for this indication is the same as when oestrogen is administered orally or transdermally. The undesirable effects section has also been updated. See SPC.

Vfend

The summary of product characteristics for Vfend (voriconazole) now states that coadministration of efavirenz is

contraindicated because efavirenz significantly decreases voriconazole plasma concentrations and voriconazole also significantly increases efavirenz plasma concentrations (Pfizer). Ventricular tachycardia has been added as a rare cardiovascular undesirable effect. The shelf life of the unreconstituted powder for solution for infusion has been extended to three years. See SPC.

DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

Hypovase Starter Pack

Hypovase (prazosin) B.D. Starter Packs (8x500µg tablets and 32x1mg tablets) are being discontinued from 1 February 2005 (Pfizer). Packs of 56 Hypovase tablets 500µg, 1mg and 2mg remain available.

Mefoxin

Mefoxin (cefotaxime sodium) injection is being discontinued (Merck Sharp & Dohme). The company says supplies should remain available at least until the end of the year. Further details on 01992 467272.

COUNTER MEDICINES

Numark Aciclovir cream

Numark Aciclovir Cold Sore Cream (aciclovir 5 per cent) is now available to Numark members. Recommended retail price, 2g £4.49. Legal category: P

Clearsore Aciclovir Cream

Clearsore Aciclovir Cream (aciclovir 5 per cent) is now available from Vantage Pharmacy. Recommended retail price, 2g £2.99. Legal category: P

PRODUCTS MISCELLANY

Amdipharm products

From 1 January 2005 Amdipharm will take over the licence ownership of the following products (formerly Novartis): Anturan (sulphinpyrazone); Slow-Trasicor (oxprenolol); Trasicor (oxprenolol); Viskaldix (pindolol) and Viskan (pindolol). From this date medical information enquiries about these products should be directed to Amdipharm on 0870 777 7675 (fax 0870 777 7875). Stock orders should also be made via Amdipharm.

Amias

Takeda will have sole responsibility for the marketing and distribution

Event announcements

The Journal welcomes details of future events relevant to pharmacists, especially those organised by pharmacists or pharmaceutical organisations. There is no charge for insertion of an item but *The Journal* is unable to guarantee insertion of any item. Items are usually only published once unless there is a change of date or venue. Information should reach *The Journal* by 1pm on the Tuesday before publication.

of Amias (candesartan cilexetil) from 1 January 2005. Any enquiries about the product should be directed to Takeda on 01628 537900 (fax 01628 526615).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Gilead Sciences

The telephone number for Gilead Sciences medical information has been changed to 01223 897555.

CHRISTMAS CLOSURES

AstraZeneca

AstraZeneca offices will be closed from 4pm on 24 December until 8am on 4 January 2005. The medical information department (tel 01582 836836) and customer services department (01582 837837) will be open between 9am and 4pm on 29–31 December. Outside these times messages can be left via fax or e-mail (medical information fax: 01582 838003; e-mail: medical.information@astrazeneca.com. Customer services fax: 01582 838038; e-mail: customer.services@astrazeneca.com). A medical information adviser is always available on 07785 577240.

Bristol-Myers Squibb

The offices of Bristol-Myers Squibb will be closed from 4pm on 24 December until 9am on 4 January 2005. The medical information department will be open from 9am to 5pm on 29–31 December and 3 January on 020 8754 3740 or 0800 731 1736. The customer services department will be open on 29–31 December from 9am to 5pm on 01244 586250. Outside these times an out-of-hours service for emergency calls only will be available on 020 8572 7422.

Eli Lilly

Eli Lilly medical information (01256 315999) will close at noon on 24 December. From 29–31 December it will be open from 10am until 2pm. Normal hours will resume on 4 January 2005. Outside these hours an emergency only service will operate.

ABOUT PEOPLE

Guildry of Stirling

Alan Webb, MRPharmS, previously chief pharmaceutical officer for Forth Valley Health Board, Scotland, has been appointed Dean of the Guildry of Stirling.

Ray Hill

Ray Hill, executive director, licensing and external research at Merck Sharp & Dohme has been awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Bradford. He received the doctorate for his ongoing support to the University of Bradford school of pharmacy, in particular for his contributions as member and chairman of the pharmacy external advisory board.

FUTURE EVENTS

Radiopharmacy

UK Radiopharmacy Group "practice update" workshop, Beeches Management Centre, Bournville, Birmingham, 7 January 2005. Cost £80 (accommodation for 6 January £70). Further details from Paul Maltby on 0151 706 4521 (e-mail paul.maltby@rlbuht.nhs.uk). Website www.ukrg.org.uk.

CORRECTIONS

Steve Dunn

Steve Dunn is group managing director of AAH Pharmaceuticals. The managing director of Lloydspharmacy is Justin Ash and not as suggested in a letter to *The Journal* last week (*PJ*, 20 November, p743).

Christmas and New Year issues

The Christmas issue of *The Journal*, dated 18/25 December, will close for press on Tuesday 14 December. The first issue of the new year, dated 1/8 January 2005, will close for press on Tuesday 4 January and should be with members by 7 January.