

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Paracetamol

Paracetamol soluble tablets 500mg, packs of 100 (5 tubes of 20 tablets) are now available from Alpharma; net price £4.69. Legal category: POM.

SPC CHANGES

Optimax

It is no longer necessary for prescribers and patients to be registered with Merck Pharmaceuticals before supply of Optimax (l-tryptophan). The company says that the Eosinophilia Myalgia Syndrome (EMS) surveillance system is no longer necessary. The summary of product characteristics now states that caution should be exercised with patients who experience some but not all of the symptoms of EMS after taking l-tryptophan. Treatment should be withheld until the possibility of EMS can be excluded. The product is no longer restricted to patients whose illness has continued for more than two years. See SPC. Optimax will be available in the normal way through wholesalers after 14 February. Further details from the OPTICS unit on 0845 762 6902.

Reyataz

The summary of product characteristics for Reyataz (atazanavir) has been updated to include information concerning immune reactivation syndrome (Bristol-Myers Squibb). The SPC now states that, in HIV-infected patients with severe immune deficiency at the time of initiation of combination antiretroviral therapy, an inflammatory reaction to asymptomatic or residual opportunistic pathogens may arise and cause serious clinical conditions or aggravation of symptoms. See SPC.

DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

Flixotide inhaler

Flixotide (fluticasone propionate) inhaler 25µg is being discontinued when stocks are exhausted (GlaxoSmithKline). The company expects this to be in March. All other presentations of Flixotide remain available.

Grisovin

Grisovin (griseofulvin) tablets are being discontinued and will be unavailable from March (GlaxoSmithKline).

Lasix

Lasix (furosemide) tablets 20mg will be discontinued when current stocks are exhausted (Borg Medicare). Current stock has an expiry date of May 2005 and can be ordered on a sale or return basis. Details from Distriphar customer services on 0870 513 3347.

Melleril

All forms of Melleril (thioridazine) will be discontinued by 30 June (Novartis). Prescribers are being advised not to initiate patients on the treatment and to discontinue treatment in those already taking the drug, following recommended guidelines. Details from Novartis on 01276 698370.

SUPPLY ISSUES

Daonil tablets

Aventis says that the only stock of Daonil (glibenclamide) tablets 5mg currently available has an expiry date of June 2005. Customers are asked to accept the short-dated stock on a sale or return basis.

Diloxanide tablets

Diloxanide furoate tablets 500mg x 30 are still out of stock (Sovereign Medical). The expected availability date has now moved to September. Further details from medical information on 01268 535233.

Predenema

Predenema (prednisolone) retention enemas, both long and standard tubes, are out of stock (Forest Laboratories). The company expects the product to be in short supply for the foreseeable future and advises that alternative treatments should be considered.

PRODUCTS MISCELLANY

Zamadol Melt

Zamadol Melt (tramadol) orodispersible tablets 50mg are now also available in packs of 60 (Viartis). Net price, £7.12.

Zydol

Responsibility for Zydol (tramadol) (formerly a Pfizer product) has been transferred to Grünenthal and the product will now appear in Grünenthal livery.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Academia

Ralph Higson, MRPharmS, has acquired Academia, the supplier of

RECALLED PRODUCTS

Crescent bendrofluazide tablets

The following batch of Crescent Pharmaceuticals bendrofluazide (bendroflumethiazide) tablets 2.5mg is being recalled because the cartons contain warfarin tablets 3mg.

Batch number	Expiry date	Pack size	First distributed
404340	April 2006	28 tablets	July 2004

Recipients are asked to quarantine any stocks of these tablets and return them to their supplier for replacement or credit. Pharmacists are advised to try to recover these tablets from patients who may have received them and advise patients to contact their doctor if they experience any unusual bleeding. Further details from Crescent customer care on 07799 666373 or at www.mhra.gov.uk.

Medisense Optium Plus

Sigma Pharmaceuticals is recalling Medisense Optium Plus blood glucose monitoring strips, batch numbers 10149, 10128, 10150, and 10195 because some leaflets are not written in English. Recipients should contact Sigma for credit or replacement on 01923 444999.

historical pharmacy replicas. He can be contacted at r.h.higson@iclway.co.uk.

Aventis ordering

All orders for Aventis products should now be directed to sanofi-aventis, 1 Onslow Street, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4YS, (telephone 0800 854430, fax 01483 554809). The company asks that Aventis and Sanofi-Synthelabo orders be kept separate until advised and say that mixed orders could result in delayed delivery. Ordering for Distriphar brands will remain with the West Malling office until further notice.

ABOUT PEOPLE

Sue Sharpe

Sue Sharpe, chief executive of the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee, has become a trustee of Developing Patient Partnerships.

APPOINTMENTS

Elizabeth Williamson

Elizabeth Williamson, MRPharmS, senior lecturer in pharmacognosy and phytotherapy at the University of London School of Pharmacy, has been appointed professor of pharmacy and director of practice at the University of Reading school of pharmacy. She will take up her new post on 1 April.

Laurence Patterson

Laurence Patterson, formerly head of the department of pharmaceutical and biological chemistry at the University of London School of Pharmacy, has been appointed director of the

new Institute of Cancer Therapeutics at the University of Bradford.

Lloydspharmacy

Richard Smith, transformation director at Somerfield, has been appointed chief operations director at Lloydspharmacy. He will take up his post on 18 April.

UniChem Board

Chris Martin, MRPharmS, chairman of Pembrokeshire Local Health Board, has been appointed a non-executive director of the UniChem board. Mark Stephenson, previously head of marketing and strategy has been appointed marketing director, and Jeremy Main, former managing director of Holsten UK, has been appointed sales director.

CHRISTMAS PRIZE DETAILS

The Journal has received a number of enquiries about where we obtained the prize for our Christmas crossword competition. The silk tie and scarf from Pharmacopoeia can be purchased by e-mailing Susie Freeman (susiefreeman@mac.com). Prices (including postage and packaging) are £60 for the tie and £90 for the scarf (150x40cm).



WANTS**Locums in Liverpool**

Peter Johnstone, MRPharmS, head of medicines management at North Liverpool Primary Care Trust, would like to hear from locum pharmacists who work in any area of Liverpool. He aims to set up a database so that locums can receive updates about training opportunities, new services and the new pharmacy contract. He can be contacted on 0151 234 5038 (e-mail peter.johnstone@northliverpoolpct.nhs.uk).

AWARDS**UKCPA awards**

Applications are being sought for the United Kingdom Clinical Pharmacy Association Napp pain award and the Boehringer-Ingelheim respiratory award. The awards recognise innovation and excellence in the delivery of pain control and pharmaceutical care for respiratory patients,

respectively. Both awards are for £1,500 and are open to pharmacists or technicians from primary or secondary care. Details from Marie Matthews on 0116 277 6999 (e-mail mmatthews@ukcpa.com). Closing date 1 June. The Merck medicines management award 2005 has been withdrawn.

RESOURCES**Medicines Compendium**

The Medicines Compendium 2005 is now available. UK medicines information centres will automatically receive free copies. Free copies can be requested for NHS hospital pharmacies and community pharmacies by e-mailing compendium.omsg.co.uk (fax 0870 010 2181). Those ineligible for free copies may purchase one for £54 (including postage) on 01233 214555 or by sending an e-mail to the above address. Orders will be dispatched on a first come, first served basis.

Financial advice website

Statim Finance, the financial support division of AAH Pharmaceuticals, has launched a website for independent pharmacists. The site contains relevant financial information, links to sites of interest, a loan calculator and articles on topics such as dealing with value added tax and hiring staff. The site can be accessed at www.statimfinance.co.uk.

FUTURE EVENTS**Clinical trials**

Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency conference entitled "Clinical trials — where are we now?" Le Meridien Piccadilly, London, 15–17 February. Cost £1,468.75. Day rates available. Details on 020 7084 2690.

New contract

CAMRx pharmacy development group road shows on the new

pharmacy contract, Ilford, Essex, 16 February and Elstree, Hertfordshire 23 February. Attendance free. Further details from Phillipa Capon on 01530 510520.

Critical care

United Kingdom Clinical Pharmacy Association Critical Care Group study day, entitled "Starting out in critical care", Wallacespace, London, 22 February. Cost members £105, non-members £165. Further details from Marie Matthews on 0116 277 6999 (e-mail mmatthews@ukcpa.com). Website www.ukcpa.org.

Analgesics

Therapeutic Research and Education Organisation seminar on "The development of new analgesics", Royal Society of Medicine, London, 13 April. Cost industry delegates £180, academic delegates £90. Details from Andrew Sutton on 01483 688300 (e-mail asutton@gcpl.co.uk).

Corrections**Announcements**

The supplier of historical pharmacy replicas recently acquired by Ralph Higson, MRPharmS, is called *Academica Ltd*, not *Academia* (p142).

Medicines Compendium

The e-mail address for ordering copies of the Medicines Compendium 2005 is compendium@omsg.co.uk and not as stated (p143).