

NEW MEDICINES

Aloxi

COMPOSITION: palonosetron 50µg/ml.

PRESENTATION: Solution for injection.

CLASS/ACTION: 5HT₃ receptor antagonist.

INDICATIONS: Prevention of acute nausea and vomiting associated with highly emetogenic cancer chemotherapy and the prevention of nausea and vomiting associated with moderately emetogenic cancer chemotherapy.

DOSAGE: 250µg as a single intravenous bolus over 30 seconds approximately 30 minutes before the start of chemotherapy.

Repeated doses within seven days are not recommended. Efficacy may be enhanced by addition of a corticosteroid administered before chemotherapy.

CAUTIONS/PRECAUTIONS: Patients with a history of constipation or signs of subacute intestinal obstruction should be monitored since palonosetron can increase large bowel transit time. Caution should be exercised in the concomitant use of palonosetron with products that increase the QT interval or in patients likely to develop prolongation of the QT interval.

SIDE EFFECTS: Common (>1 per cent): headache, dizziness, constipation, diarrhoea.

LEGAL CATEGORY: POM.

NET PRICE: 5ml vial £55.89.

CONTACT DETAILS: Cambridge Laboratories, Deltic House, Kingfisher Way, Silverlink Business Park, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear NE28 9NX. Tel 0191 296 9369.

SPC CHANGES

Losec

The summary of product characteristics for Losec (omeprazole; AstraZeneca) has been updated. It now states that Losec can be used during pregnancy. It also states that omeprazole is excreted in breast milk but is not likely to influence the child when therapeutic doses are used. The SPC for capsules and MUPs now also states that in children aged one year and over with severe ulcerating reflux oesophagitis, Losec is recommended for healing and symptom relief at the following doses: 10–20kg, 10mg once daily, >20kg, 20mg once daily (increased to 20mg and 40mg, respectively, for four to 12 weeks if needed). The undesirable effects section has also been updated to include use in

RECALLED PRODUCTS

Moxonidine

Solvay Healthcare Ltd is recalling the following batches of moxonidine tablets 200, 300 and 400µg, 28-tablet packs, in Generics (UK) livery, due to missing text in the patient information leaflets.

Strength	Batch number	Expiry date	Strength	Batch number	Expiry date
200µg	26012	01/05/06	300µg	26241	01/05/06
200µg	26501	01/06/06	300µg	26491	01/06/06
200µg	25702	01/02/06	300µg	27608	01/11/06
200µg	26983	01/08/06	400µg	26498	01/06/06
300µg	27071	01/08/06	400µg	27063	01/08/06
300µg	25697	01/01/06	400µg	25688	01/02/06
300µg	26021	01/05/06	400µg	26009	01/05/06

No other presentations are affected. Recipients are asked to quarantine any remaining stock of these batches and return it to the supplier for replacement. Further information is available from Generics (UK) customer services on 01707 853100 and www.mhra.gov.uk.

children. Treatment should be initiated by a paediatrician. See SPC.

Vfend

Vfend (voriconazole; Pfizer) is now additionally indicated for the treatment of candidaemia in non-neutropenic patients. The summary of product characteristics also states that there is an interaction between Vfend and methadone which may require a methadone dose reduction. Insomnia, encephalopathy, somnolence during infusion and tinnitus have been added as rare undesirable effects. Supraventricular tachycardia and prolongation of the QT interval is now listed as an uncommon rather than a rare adverse effect. The pharmacodynamic properties section has also been updated. See SPC.

COUNTER MEDICINES

Optrex Infected Eyes

Optrex Infected Eyes (chloramphenicol) eye drops 0.5 per cent w/v are now available from Optrex. Recommended retail price, 10ml £4.79. Legal category: P.



PRODUCTS MISCELLANY

Kalten

The licence for Kalten (atenolol and co-amilozide) capsules has been transferred from AstraZeneca to Bolton Pharmaceutical Company 100 Ltd and the product is now distributed by M & A Pharmechem (tel 01942 816184). Further details from BPC100 on 0845 602 3907.

DRUG TARIFF UPDATES

Metronidazole

The Department of Health and the National Assembly for Wales have agreed to allow "no cheaper stock obtainable" (NCSO) endorsements for metronidazole 200mg/5ml oral suspension for June 2005 prescriptions.

SUPPLY ISSUES

Zarontin

There is a delay in the supply of Zarontin (ethosuximide) 250mg capsules. Pfizer is providing it direct to pharmacies on an

emergency supply basis. For medical questions contact the medical information department on 01304 616161; for questions on supply issues contact the customer services department on 01304 645262.

FUTURE EVENTS

Ophthalmic pharmacists

Ophthalmic Pharmacists' Group seminar, Sutton Hospital, Surrey, 29 June. Free of charge. Further information from Nurjehan Moledina, telephone 020 8296 4388 or e-mail Nurjehan.Moledina@epsom-sthelier.nhs.uk.

CORRECTIONS

Etanercept

Etanercept is licensed for the treatment of adults with moderate to severe plaque psoriasis and not as stated in our CPD article last week (4 June, pp689–92). The recommended dose for this indication is 25mg twice weekly. The licence for this indication was granted in November 2004.

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