

## PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

### Aclasta

Aclasta (zoledronic acid) solution for infusion 5mg/100ml is now available from Novartis. Aclasta is licensed for the treatment of Paget's disease of the bone. Net price, 100ml, £283.74. Legal category: POM.

### Keppra

Keppra (levetiracetam) concentrate for solution for infusion 100mg/ml is now available from UCB Pharma. Net price, 10 x 5ml vials, £135. Legal category: POM.

## SPC CHANGES

### Decapeptyl

Decapeptyl (triptorelin; Ipsen) is now indicated for the treatment of precocious puberty. The dose is one intramuscular injection of Decapeptyl SR 11.25mg repeated every three months. Treatment should be stopped around the physiological age of puberty. The summary of product characteristics warns that initial ovarian stimulation followed by treatment-induced oestrogen withdrawal may lead to vaginal bleeding. The undesirable effects and pharmacodynamic properties sections have been updated to reflect the new indication. See SPC.

### Xenical

The summary of product characteristics for Xenical (orlistat; Roche) now states that orlistat may indirectly reduce the availability of oral contraceptives and lead to unexpected pregnancies in some individual cases. An additional contraceptive method is recommended in cases of severe diarrhoea. See SPC.

## DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

### Benzhexol

Benzhexol tablets 100 x 2mg and benzhexol tablets 100 x 5mg have been discontinued by TEVA.

### Ergometrine

Ergometrine tablets 21 x 500µg have been discontinued by UCB Pharma.

### Lidocaine

The following products have been discontinued by TEVA: lidocaine gel 1 per cent 12 x 15ml; lidocaine gel 1 per cent Anti 12 x 15ml; lidocaine gel 2 per cent 12 x 15ml; and lidocaine gel 2 per cent Anti 12 x 15ml (all in packs of 1).

## RECALLED PRODUCTS

### Blood glucose meters

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has continued to receive reports of adverse incidents where the units of measurement displayed on a number of blood glucose meters have changed from mmol/L to mg/dl, leading the user to think that the blood glucose level is 18 times higher than it is. The affected meters are FreeStyle and FreeStyle Mini (previously known as TheraSense) and MediSense Optium Xceed manufactured by Abbott Diabetes Care. The units of measurement can be inadvertently changed and, on FreeStyle and FreeStyle Mini meters, may also change spontaneously following continued use of the meters once the low battery sign has appeared. The manufacturer will replace, free of charge, affected meters with new ones for which the unit of measurement cannot be changed. In the meantime, the user should ensure that the meter reads in mmol/L every time they test. Batteries should be changed immediately when the low battery symbol appears. Affected meters include those with the following serial numbers on the back of the meter:

#### Blood glucose meter

Freestyle Mini  
Freestyle  
Optium Xceed

#### Serial number

T-G, R-F, T-F and V-F  
V-G, C-D, C-E and K-E  
XC0

Pharmacists are asked not to supply affected meters and to contact Abbott pharmacy line (0800 3168884) for a free replacement. When dispensing Freestyle test strips and Optium Plus test strips, pharmacists should advise the user to contact Abbott (0500 467466) to find out whether they need a replacement meter. Customers can continue to use their meters before contacting Abbott as long as they ensure that meters are reading in mmol/L. This alert updates one issued earlier this year (*PJ*, 18 March, p317). In a statement, the MHRA also reminds health care professionals and patients that LifeScan OneTouch Ultra, LifeScan InDuo and LifeScan PocketScan, manufactured by LifeScan, are also affected by this problem (*PJ*, 14 May 2005, p579).

## SUPPLY ISSUES

### Norphyllin SR

Norphyllin SR (aminophylline; TEVA) tablets 225mg in packs of 56 (Ivax livery) are temporarily unavailable.

(with an afternoon and evening session), David Lloyd Racquet and Fitness Club, Hull. Booking is essential and can be made by e-mailing Janet Peacham (janet.peacham@erhlp.nhs.uk).

## PRODUCTS MISCELLANY

### Adartrel

GlaxoSmithKline has decided not to launch 84 x 0.5mg and 84 x 2mg packs of Adartrel (ropinirole). The following packs will be available: 12 x 0.25mg; 28 x 0.5mg; and 28 x 2mg. Enquiries on 0800 221441.

## DRUG TARIFF UPDATES

### NCSO endorsements

The Department of Health and the National Assembly for Wales have agreed to allow "no cheaper stock obtainable" (NCSO) endorsements for diamorphine injection 5mg, 10mg, 30mg, 100mg and 500mg and ketoprofen capsules 100mg for June 2006 prescriptions.

## FUTURE EVENTS

### New contract

The East Riding and Hull Local Pharmaceutical Committee and the Hull Pharmacists' Association conference on "The new pharmacy contract — implementation and potentiation", 21 June, from 1pm

## Pharmaceutical Care Awards conference

The Pharmaceutical Care Awards conference and awards ceremony will be held at Stationers' Hall and Apothecaries' Hall, London EC4 on 29 June from 3.30pm to 7pm. The keynote speaker will be Niall Dickson, chief executive of the King's Fund, and the chairman for the afternoon will be Duncan McRobbie, chairman of the UK Clinical Pharmacy Association. There are a number of free places available. Further information is available from Emma Kerby-Evans on 020 7572 2414 (e-mail emma.kerby-evans@pharmj.org.uk).

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