

SPC CHANGES

Ebixa

The summary of product characteristics for Ebixa (memantine; Lundbeck) has been updated. Hypertension has been added to the list of most frequently occurring adverse events. Fungal infections and venous thrombosis/thromboembolism are now listed as uncommon adverse effects. See SPC.

Sustiva

The summaries of product characteristics for Sustiva (efavirenz; Bristol-Myers Squibb) have been updated and now include new drug interaction information. The SPCs say that co-administration of efavirenz with itraconazole can result in decreased levels of itraconazole compared with itraconazole alone; the SPCs recommend that alternative antifungal treatment should be considered. New details about co-administration of efavirenz with diltiazem and other calcium channel blockers has also been added. See SPCs.

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Enbrel

Enbrel (etanercept) solution for injection in pre-filled syringe 25mg will be available from Wyeth from 8 January. Net price: 4 x 25mg, £357.50. Legal category: POM.

DISCONTINUED PRODUCTS

Cromogen and budesonide

Teva UK has discontinued Cromogen (sodium cromoglicate; IVAX livery) metered dose inhaler 5mg and Budesonide Cyclocaps 100 x 200µg and 50 x 400µg. Cromogen Easi-Breathe inhaler 5mg will be discontinued from 1 March.

Fosamax

Merck Sharp & Dohme has discontinued Fosamax (alendronate sodium) tablets 5mg. Supplies should remain available until the beginning of February. Fosamax tablets 10mg and Fosamax Once Weekly tablets 70mg remain available.

Idrolax

Schwarz Pharma has discontinued Idrolax (macrogol 4000) sachets 10g. Existing stocks are expected to be exhausted by the end of February. Enquiries about Idrolax can be made to Schwarz until the

British pharmacist wins Canadian prize



Shakeel Bhatti was awarded the Five Star Pharmacist award from the College of Pharmacists of British Columbia, Canada, for his community pharmacy work. Pictured is Dr Bhatti (left) receiving the award from John Hope, CPBC president, in November last year.

end of March. From 1 April Idrolax enquiries should be made to Ipsen Ltd on 01753 627777.

Prexige

Prexige (lumiracoxib; Novartis) tablets 400mg will be discontinued from 31 January. Prexige tablets 100mg will remain available for symptomatic relief in the treatment of osteoarthritis.

Sulpitil

Sulpitil (sulpiride; Pharmacia) tablets 112 x 200mg have been discontinued. Existing stocks are expected to remain available until the end of February. Sulpitil tablets 28 x 200mg remain available.

Topicycline

Shire Pharmaceuticals will discontinue Topicycline (tetracycline) solution 70ml at the end of January. Further information on 01256 894107.

DRUG TARIFF UPDATES

Moxonidine

The Department of Health and the National Assembly for Wales have agreed to allow "no cheaper stock obtainable" (NCSO) endorsements for moxonidine tablets 400µg for December 2006 prescriptions.

ABOUT PEOPLE

Christopher Dunn

Christopher Dunn, MRPharmS, chief executive of Swindon and Wiltshire Local Pharmaceutical Committee, has been awarded the title professor of prescribing practice at the faculty of health and social care, University of the West of England, Bristol.

Heather MacDonald

Heather MacDonald, RegPharmTech, was named Lloydspharmacy Pharmacy Technician of the Year for 2006.

RESOURCES

Asthma MURs

MIMS, Asthma UK and the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee have produced a resource providing information and advice for pharmacists undertaking medicines use reviews for people with asthma. The resources will be distributed to pharmacies in January; further information is available from Asthma UK on 020 7786 5000.

Pharmacopoeia

'The international pharmacopoeia, 4th edition' is now available from the World Health Organization. Further information and order form via www.who.int/medicines.

Pharmacy practice

The World Health Organization and the International Pharmaceutical Federation have published "Developing pharmacy practice — a focus on patient care", a tool to enhance the role of pharmacists in health care. Available via www.who.int/medicines.

AWARDS

Humanitarian work

The Department of Health, the British Medical Association and the Royal College of Nursing are inviting applications for grants from the NHS Humanitarian Fund. NHS teams carrying out

humanitarian work overseas between April 2007 and April 2008 can apply for up to £3,000 from a total of £40,500 being made available. Further information via www.bma.org.uk and by e-mailing internationalinfo@bma.org.uk. Closing date, 9 February.

FUTURE EVENTS

ECA conferences

European Compliance Academy conferences, "Quality control of raw materials", Vienna, Austria, 30–31 January, and "The validation manager", Barcelona, Spain, 31 January to 2 February. Further information and online booking via www.gmp-compliance.org.

Prescribing

National Prescribing Centre conference for non-medical prescribers, London, 26 January. Free of charge. Further information from www.npc.co.uk or www.npc.nhs.uk.

Pharmacy trade

"New frontiers" annual business seminar for companies keen to expand into the UK, Ware, Hertfordshire, 4–7 March. Further information from www.thecca.org.uk/newfrontiers.

UKPHA

UK Public Health Association annual forum, Edinburgh International Conference Centre, Edinburgh, 28–29 March. Further information from Laura Farrey on 0191 241 4523 (e-mail lauraf@benchcom.co.uk).

CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

Winner and answers

Our Christmas picture competition winner is Kevin Fear, MRPharmS, from Gateshead, who will receive Marks & Spencer vouchers to the value of £50. The answers were: (A) a suppository mould, (B) a carboy, (C) a Turbohaler, and (D) a pill making machine (*PJ*, 23/30 December 2006, p800).

Contact us

Notice-board welcomes information relevant to pharmacists. There is no charge for inclusion of an item but *The Journal* is unable to guarantee a particular publication date. Information can be e-mailed to notice-board@pharmj.org.uk