



Medicine Information NEWSLETTER

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Editors' Desk

The third issue of our quarterly electronic publication 'Medicine Information Newsletter' is in your hand. Hope you would enjoy reading and find it useful like previous issues. We are delighted with the overwhelming responses of readers ranging from health professionals to the common man.

The availability of large number of medicines often with increased potency in a variety of dosage forms provide wide opportunity to the physicians to select in the best interest of their patients.

Unfortunately, this is also associated with increasing hazards like medication errors and adverse events. The increasing number of sound alike and look alike brand names and often with similar packages further aggravate the issues both at prescribing and dispensing points. Prescribing in 'Generic Name' against the usual practice of 'Brand Name' has been advocated for some time to prevent confusion and avoid medication errors. The untiring effort of a Nalgonda based pharmacist, Mr. Chilkuri Paramathma, promoting prescription writing in capital to prevent medication error deserved wide appreciation. His success is seen from the recent public notification of Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare seeking public opinion on the proposed rule of prescribing in Generic Name and in Capital. It becomes the professional responsibility of all healthcare professionals to ensure safe medication practice in the interest of the patient and the individual as well.

The current issue focuses on Sofosbuvir for treatment of Hepatitis C, safety alert on NSAIDs, medicines to avoid, deceiving advertisement, malaria vaccine and the usual features: website of interest, forthcoming courses & conferences, and important health days falling in the next quarter (October to December) as a ready reference for observation and celebration.

Your feedback is important to us. You can reach us through e. mail: dicpharmd@gmail.com

We take this opportunity to wish you all Happy Vijaya Dashami and Deepavali falling in the next quarter.

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Website of Interest: HealthConnect International

HealthConnect International is a not-for-profit consulting group whose mission is to enhance health improvement programs in low-resource settings through the cost-effective application of information and communications technologies (ICTs). Its "Free Information Resources Bulletin" is a newsletter that offers information on different types of healthcare-related publications – manuals, monographs, books, journals, CD-ROMs and other resources.

<http://www.healthconnect-intl.org>

Conferences

67th Indian Pharmaceutical Congress is scheduled at JSS University, Mysore, during December 19-21, 2015.

The theme of the congress is Pharma – Vision 2020: Pharmacist for a Healthy India. Abstract submission is open now. The last date for submission of abstract is 30.09.2015.

More details are available at <http://scientificipca.org/>.

International Conference 'Evidence-Based Medicine: achievements and barriers': The Cochrane working group and the Kazan Federal University jointly with the All-Russian Association of Clinical Pharmacologists, the All-Russian Society of Organization of Health-care, Public Health and the Association of Medical Societies for Quality and Russian Scientific Society of Pharmacologists are organising this conference. It is planned to have the event in the middle of December 2015. The more details can be seen at <http://kpfu.ru/biology-medicine/struktura-institutata/kafedry/kfikf/konferenciya/submission-requirements>

ISPOR 21st Annual International Meeting: International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcome Research schedules its 21st Annual International Meeting during May 21-25, 2016, at Washington DC. Abstract submission period: 14th October 2015 to 14th January 2016. More details are available at <http://www.ispor.org/Event/Index/2016Washington>

Deceiving Advertisements

The consumer Complaints Council (CCC) of the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) have recently found many claims, in the health and personal care products, are either misleading or false or do not have enough evidence. Some of the claims have contravened the provision of Drugs and Magic Remedies Act. ASCI is a self regulatory voluntary organization of the advertising industry and it works with a mission to maintain and enhance the public's confidence in advertising. Some of the claims or advertisements are: Medicinal ayurvedic properties which enhance the breasts and make the women feel perfect; Gives freedom from pain in one's muscle and bones; Trusted by millions of doctors; Unbreakable trust of crores of people from various countries; India's 1st 2-IN-1 serum that gives 2X more glow and nourishment; Aloe Vera extract fills pores and provide instant fairness; Provides special treatment for weaknesses in sex; useful in increasing one's appetite, keeps one active throughout the day, brings sound sleep, purifies blood, and makes one healthy; Removes under eye circle; A vigor and passion enhancer; Provides complete 100% Ayurvedic treatment of Paralysis with no side effects and 100% money back guarantee; Instant fat reduction & Inch loss; Provides successful treatment of inability of organ, premature ejaculation, and impotency, semen in urine, nightfall, energy, nil sperms; Successful Ayurvedic medicine for Piles since 20 years; Rebuilding of Enamel; Successful treatment of infertility in women and impotency in males; Say bye-bye to all kinds of masculine weakness; Provides protection from Swine Flu; Help to reduce hair fall, helps stimulate hair growth; and 100% Ayurvedic with five benefits, stops the ill effects of alcohol, increases the efficiency of liver, increases appetite, improves digestion, useful for diabetic people and increases immunity power.

The people are advised not to believe all the claims made in advertisements and encouraged to make complaints against these misleading and un-substantiating claims. The more details can be seen at <http://www.ascionline.org>

Courses and Training Programmes

Free Course:

Epidemiology – The Basic Science of Public Health

Coursera provides universal access to the world's best education, partnering with top universities and organizations to offer courses for anyone to take, for free. Often called “the cornerstone” of public health, epidemiology is the study of the distribution and determinants of diseases, health conditions, or events among populations and the application of that study to control health problems. By applying the concepts learned in this course to current public health problems and issues, students will understand the practice of epidemiology as it relates to real life and makes for a better appreciation of public health programs and policies. This course explores public health issues like cardiovascular and infectious diseases – both locally and globally – through the lens of epidemiology. More details at: <https://www.coursera.org/learn/epidemiology>

Free Online Training Course: Ethics of Ancillary Care in Research

Ethics of Ancillary Care in Research is a free, online and open access training course developed by the Global Health Network. The course takes between 45 – 60 minutes to complete with a certificate issued upon successful completion of the final quiz. The more details are available at <https://globalhealthtrainingcentre.tghn.org/elearning/short-courses/ancillary-care/>

Digital Medicine - for Measuring Adherence !

“Worldwide more than 50% of all medicines are prescribed, dispensed or sold inappropriately while 50% of patients fail to take them correctly”, a World Health Organization (WHO) survey reports. The non-adherence seriously worsens the quality of life.

US FDA, the Drug Regulatory Authority of United States of America, has recently accepted the first digital medicine – new drug application. The product pairs ingestible sensor and ability drug to treat people with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and some cases for major depressive disorders. The ingestible sensor communicates with a wearable sensor patch and medical software application. The idea is to measure adherence.

Patients suffering from severe mental illnesses struggle with adhering to or communicating with healthcare teams about their medication regimen, which can greatly impact outcomes and disease progression. The mechanism looks simple. The embedded sensor gets activated in gastric juice and sends signal to a skin patch electrode. This is a wireless transmission of information such as vital sign, body position, and verification of medication ingestion.

If the FDA approves, the combination of drug-device can be used to tailor medicines more closely to reflect medication taking pattern and lifestyle choices.

[Source - <http://medcitynews.com/2015/09/proteus-digital-health-and-otsuka-pharmaceuticals/>]

Quote

“In my experience” is a phrase that usually introduces a statement of rank prejudice or bias. The information that follows it cannot be checked, nor has it been subjected to any analysis other than some vague tally in the speaker's memory.

Michael Crichton, 1971
New England Journal of Medicine

Alert on Non-Aspirin Non-Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)

The US FDA, the Drug Regulatory Authority of USA, has recently issued warning that non-aspirin non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs increase the chance of a heart attack or stroke. It directs a change in labelling of prescription NSAIDs to reflect the following:

- The risk of heart attack or stroke can occur as early as the first weeks of using an NSAID. The risk may increase with longer use of the NSAID.
- The risk appears greater at higher doses.
- It was previously thought that all NSAIDs may have a similar risk. Newer information makes it less clear that the risk for heart attack or stroke is similar for all NSAIDs; however, this newer information is not sufficient for us to determine that the risk of any particular NSAID is definitely higher or lower than that of any other particular NSAID.
- NSAIDs can increase the risk of heart attack or stroke in patients with or without heart disease or risk factors

Topical NSAID products are alternative to oral and injection products. When systemic use of NSAIDs is necessary, three points should be the driving force: Select the NSAID with lowest risk profile, use lowest effective dose and use for the shortest time possible.

for heart disease. A large number of studies support this finding, with varying estimates of how much the risk is increased, depending on the drugs and the doses studied.

- In general, patients with heart disease or risk factors for it have a greater likelihood of heart attack or stroke following NSAID use than patients without these risk factors because they have a higher risk at baseline.
- Patients treated with NSAIDs following a first heart attack were more likely to die in the first year after the heart attack compared to patients who were not treated with NSAIDs after their first heart attack.
- There is an increased risk of heart failure with NSAID use.
- The USFDA recommends that Patients and health care professionals should remain alert for heart-related side effects the entire time that NSAIDs are being taken. Patients taking NSAIDs should seek medical attention immediately if they experience symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath or trouble breathing, weakness in one part or side of their body, or slurred speech.

Sofosbuvir 400 mg tablet for Hepatitis C Treatment

Hepatitis C is a global public health crisis, with at least 150 million people living with the disease, and 350,000-500,000 people die each year from complications of it. Sofosbuvir, when used with another drug, can cure most cases of hepatitis C in 12 weeks with few side effects. This is a hepatitis C virus (HCV) nucleotide analog NS5B polymerase inhibitor. Though cost prohibitive in many countries, the generic version of the drug is available in India at a much lower price.

The recommended dose of sofosbuvir is one 400 mg tablet once daily with or without food. Monotherapy is not recommended. The recommended dosage regimens are:

Hepatitis Type	Treatment	Duration
Patients with genotype 1 or 4 Chronic Hepatitis C (CHC) virus	sofosbuvir + peginterferon alfa + ribavirin	12 weeks
Patients with genotype 2 CHC virus	sofosbuvir + ribavirin	12 weeks
Patients with genotype 3 CHC virus	sofosbuvir + ribavirin	24 weeks

As the combination medicines are known to be teratogenic, extreme care is necessary to avoid pregnancy. Both partners are to be advised to continue use of contraceptives for at least 6 months after stopping of treatment.

Malaria Vaccine is approved

The world's first malaria vaccine is recently approved by the European Drug Regulatory Authority, European Medicine Agency (EMA). Malaria is a killer disease killing around 6 lakh patients annually worldwide. After several decades of research finally the vaccine received the regulatory approval. However, World Health Organization's (WHO) assessment on public health point is awaited.

Medicines to avoid [Rev Prescriber February 2015]

These medicines are more harmful than beneficial and alternatives are available. In this issue we have included the medicines related to diabetes and nutrition.

- Gliptins – Dipeptidyl peptidase 4 inhibitors have no proven efficacy on complications of diabetes such as cardiovascular events, renal failures, neurological disorders etc. The four drugs of this category: linagliptin, saxagliptin, sitagliptin and vildagliptin; have unfavourable adverse effects including severe hypersensitivity reactions (anaphylaxis, Steven- Johnson syndrome), infection (urinary tract and upper respiratory tract infections), pancreatitis, and bullous pemphigoid (large fluid filled blisters on some areas of skin). Metformin, Glibenclamide, or insulin are better alternative. Even targeting a higher glycosylated haemoglobin level is also a reasonable choice.
- Orlistat - has only modest and transient efficacy in terms of weight loss. There is no evidence of long term efficacy. It is associated with frequent gastrointestinal disorder, hepatic disorder, hyperoxaluria and bone fracture in adolescents. This causes disturbances in absorption of fat soluble vitamins leading to a risk of deficiency. This drug also reduces the efficacy of thyroid hormone, some anti-epileptics and oral contraceptives. As there is no drug at present who can make help permanently losing weight, it is best to focus on dietary changes and

Important Health Days (October - December)

October 1 – International Day for the Elderly
October 2- National Anti Drug Addiction Day
October 10- World Mental Health Day
October 12 – World Arthritis Day
October 16 – World Food Day
October 17 – World Trauma Day
October 20- World Osteoporosis Day
October 21 – World Iodine Deficiency Day
October 24 – World Polio Day
October 26 – World Obesity Day
October 29 – World Stroke Day
October 30 – World Thrift Day
November 2 – World Pneumonia Day
November 10- World Immunization Day
November 14 – World Diabetes Day
November 15 to 25 – National Pharmacy Week
November 18 – World Epilepsy Day
November 19 – World COPD Day
November 15-21 – New Born Care Week
December 1- World AIDS Day
December 2 – National Pollution Prevention Day
December 3 – International Day of Disabled Person
December 9 – World Patient Safety Day

DISCLAIMER

The Newsletter intends to provide updated and reliable information on medicines and other related issues in an attempt to equip healthcare professionals to take informed decision in recommending medicines to the patients. However, they are encouraged to validate the contents. None of the people associated with the publication of the Newsletter nor the University shall be responsible for any liability for any damage incurred as a result of use of contents of this publication. The brand names of medicines, if mentioned, are for illustration only and the Newsletter does not endorse them.