

Medicines Optimisation News Headlines February 2013

- 1. Tredaptive modified release tablets (combined niacin-laropiprant)**
As a result of a large, long term European study (HPS2-THRIVE), the benefit-risk balance for this product is considered negative and the medicine has been recalled.
[Link](#)
- 2. Pradaxa® (dabigatran etexilate) is now contraindicated** in patients with a prosthetic heart valve requiring anticoagulant treatment. The existing warning in section 4.4 of the SPC not to use Pradaxa® in patients with prosthetic heart valves is strengthened to a contraindication based on the availability of new data from clinical trials.
[Link](#)
- 3. Good practice in prescribing and managing medicines and devices**
New guidance has recently been issued by the General Medical Council. This is an invaluable resource for revalidation and to share and discuss with GP registrars.
[Link](#)
- 4. Primary Care Respiratory Society UK (PCRS UK) website**
The Strategic Health Authority has agreed to fund a subscription for **all practices** in West Hampshire CCG to become members and access their website. This will enable unlimited access to a wealth of specialist respiratory care information, expertise and resources, plus practical everyday tools for use in respiratory care. All practice managers have recently been sent an e mail from PCRS UK with instructions of how to **activate** this subscription. Please contact Maggie Collin with any queries about this.
- 5. N-acetylcysteine** (unlicensed special order product). The DPC recommends use of this drug as a treatment for idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis following specialist recommendation. However, prices of all formulations of this drug can vary enormously and some sources are extremely expensive.
- 6. Reminder: Monitoring with long term Nitrofurantoin**
Back in 2009, Urologists wrote to GPs in the Southampton area reminding them of the BNF recommendation for regular biochemical (renal, liver function) and lung

function monitoring with screening spirometry for patients on long term nitrofurantoin following a medico-legal case.

Respiratory consultants at Portsmouth have recently written to practices following another case where a patient had significant long term lung damage. Several cases of **Nitrofurantoin induced lung fibrosis** present each year and their recommendations include checks at each issue of the repeat prescription to ensure there are no new respiratory symptoms, and/or three monthly practice spirometry for these patients.

The SPC also states that long-term use requires close monitoring for **hepatic, pulmonary and other toxicity** (especially in the elderly).

The fibrosis is not usually reversible, particularly if diagnosed late, and is entirely avoidable.

7. Topical diltiazem hydrochloride

NICE evidence summary for use of unlicensed diltiazem products for treating chronic anal fissure.

[Link](#)

8. Shortage of Isosorbide Mononitrate 10mg, 20mg and 40mg tablets

Because of problems with the availability of raw materials, there is currently a shortage of all normal release isosorbide mononitrate presentations. The shortage of this medicine may last for several months and current information indicates that normal supply is unlikely to resume before the end of April 2013. Letter from Dr Keith Ridge at the Department of Health.

[Link](#)

Recent Mental Health Guideline Updates on Southern Health Website

Bipolar Guidelines – [Link](#)

Anxiety Guidelines - [Link](#)

Other Guidelines and Medicines Optimisation advice is available on Pages4PrimaryCare at www.hampshire.nhs.uk/primary-care

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