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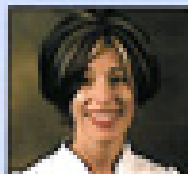
Upcoming Health Observances

letter from the co-editors

We are pleased to share the first-ever *Self Care Sound Bytes*, a must-read publication from the Nonprescription Medicines Academy (NMA). *Self Care Sound Bytes* is designed to engage practitioners by addressing your needs and interests in the field of nonprescription medicines.

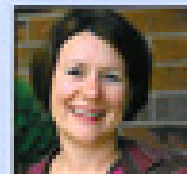
In this quarterly publication, you will find relevant subject matter surrounding self-care including tools and resources. We hope you enjoy the first publication and look forward to continuing to bring you news and information in self care that you can apply to training, research, and practice.

Warmest regards,



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Pictogram-based medication counseling decreases pediatric dosing errors, improves adherence

Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med. 2008;162(9):814-822.

Using pictograms as part of a brief medication counseling strategy can help to decrease medication dosing errors associated with pediatric liquid medications and improve medication adherence among multiethnic, low socioeconomic status caregivers.

In a study conducted in the pediatric emergency department of a large New York City public hospital, caregivers of children ages 30 days to 8 years who were prescribed scheduled or as-needed liquid medications were randomized to receive either standard medication counseling or a pictogram-based intervention. Caregivers in the intervention group received a two-page, bilingual (English and Spanish) medication in-

struction sheet that used plain language and pictograms to convey information about the drug name, indication, dose, frequency of administration, length of treatment, preparation (e.g., shaking before administering), and storage. They also were taught to measure the appropriate medication dose using a standardized dosing device. The entire intervention took no more than 3 minutes per caregiver.

The pictogram-based intervention was found to significantly improve caregiver accuracy and adherence, enhance knowledge of dosing frequency for daily dose medications, and improve medication preparation practices.



new product alerts

Salonpas Pain Relief Patch and Salonpas Arthritis Relief Patch

The Salonpas patches are the first FDA-approved, nonprescription transdermal systems for pain relief. Both patches contain methyl salicylate 10% and menthol 3%. The flexible patches can be cut to fit the affected area and left in place 8 for 12 hours.

Benzyl Alcohol Lotion 5% for Head Lice

The FDA has approved Benzyl Alcohol Lotion, 5%, a new prescription medication for the treatment of head lice in patients 6 months of age and older. Benzyl alcohol kills head lice by asphyxiation. In clinical studies, more than 75% of subjects were lice free after receiving two, 10-minute treatments 1 week apart. Sciele Pharma, Inc. (a Shionogi Company) expects to launch the product in the third quarter of 2009.

Align Digestive Care Probiotic Supplement

The probiotic supplement Align is now available nationwide. Align contains *Bifantis*® (*Bifidobacterium infantis* 35624), a patented probiotic strain that creates a natural defense against common episodic digestive upsets. Look for the new logo and green and white packaging.



The problem of drugs in drinking water

New information from the ongoing Associated Press (AP) PharmaWater investigation shows that a vast array of prescription and nonprescription medications—including antibiotics, anticonvulsants, mood stabilizers, and hormones such as estrogens—is present in the drinking water supplies of at least 51 million Americans.

Although consumers are considered the biggest contributors to the contamination, the AP reports that U.S. manufacturers have legally released at least 271 million pounds of pharmaceuticals into waterways that often provide drinking water.

In 2008, a 5-month AP investigation found evidence of prescription and nonprescription medications in the drinking water supplies of at least 41 million Americans. The concentrations of these medications were small, measured in parts per billion or trillion. But they were detected in the drinking water supplies of 24 major metropolitan areas—from Southern California to Northern New Jersey, from Detroit to Louisville. Some scientists believe that exposure to even small amounts of the drugs, over decades, could cause harm to humans.



According to new research from Procter & Gamble, PUR faucet filters can remove more than 99% of pharmaceutical compounds from tap water, and PUR pitchers can remove more than 96%. Compounds tested included hormones, antibiotics, antidepressants, anxiolytics, and pain medications.

SMAR_xT Disposal site outlines proper drug disposal

SMAR_xT Disposal is a public awareness campaign developed jointly by the American Pharmacists Association, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America. The campaign is designed to raise awareness about

the potential environmental impact of improperly disposed medications and educate consumers about proper disposal procedures. For additional information, visit www.smarxtdisposal.net.

Probiotics information for patients

Two new publications are designed to help patients navigate the growing probiotics marketplace.

The P's and Q's of Probiotics: A Consumer Guide for Making Smart Choices is available from the International Scientific Association for Probiotics and Prebiotics. The one-page fact sheet summarizes key criteria to help consumers select credible probiotic products. It can be accessed at: http://www.isapp.net/docs/Consumer_Guidelines_final.pdf.

Probiotics: What They Are and What They Can Do for You is available from the American Gastroenterological Association. The nine-page brochure addresses common uses for probiotics, safety issues, product selection considerations, and product storage. The full text of the brochure, a downloadable PDF file, and a podcast all can be accessed at: <http://www.gastro.org/wmspage.cfm?parm1=5617>.

American Gastroenterological Association issues new GERD management guidelines

Gastroenterology. 2008;135:1383-91, 1392-1413.

A new medical position statement and related technical review on the management of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) are available from the American Gastroenterological Association.

The documents address 12 broad questions that encapsulate the major issues leading to consultations for GERD in clinical practice. These questions include:

- What is the distinction between GERD and episodic heartburn?
- What is the efficacy of lifestyle modifications for GERD?
- How do antisecretory therapies compare in efficacy and under what circumstances might one be preferable to another?

The conclusions and recommendations are based on the best available evidence or the expert opinion of the authors (if quality evidence was not available).

Among the recommendations are one supporting either a short course or as-needed use of antisecretory drugs in patients who have a symptomatic esophageal syndrome without esophagitis. Proton pump inhibitors are recommended as more effective than histamine H₂-receptor antagonists for a short course of therapy.

Proton pump inhibitor cotherapy may be cost-effective in patients taking long-term, low-dose aspirin

Arch Intern Med. 2008;168(15):1684-1690

The use of nonprescription proton pump inhibitors is cost-effective in many patients taking long-term, low-dose aspirin for secondary prevention of coronary heart disease (CHD).

A pharmacoeconomic analysis compared lifelong aspirin therapy alone with aspirin plus proton pump inhibitor therapy in patients with CHD who are at least 50 years old. Variables included starting age for aspirin therapy (range 50-80 years), risk of upper gastrointestinal bleeding (range average to 8-fold increased risk), effectiveness of proton pump inhibitor co-therapy (range 25%-75%), and annual cost of proton pump inhibitor co-therapy (range \$250 to \$1,400). Aspirin plus proton pump inhibitor therapy resulted in fewer lifetime upper gastrointestinal bleeding events (3.1% vs 9.5%) and deaths (0.4% vs 1.4%).

The authors concluded that at the nonprescription cost of \$250 per year, proton pump inhibitor co-therapy was cost-effective for patients at average risk

How do proton pump inhibitors compare?

Aliment Pharmacol Ther. 2003;17:1237-45.

A meta-analysis of 16 randomized, double-blind studies concluded that all proton pump inhibitors appear to be clinically comparable after 4 weeks of treatment in GERD. The authors recommend basing the choice of which proton pump inhibitor to use on factors other than clinical efficacy, such as pharmacoeconomic considerations.

of upper gastrointestinal bleeding. At a prescription cost of \$1,400 per year, co-therapy would be cost-effective for high-risk patients only.

quick takes

Age thresholds for routine aspirin use

Heart. 2008;94:1429-32.

Data from nearly 1 million patients in England and Wales suggest that in the absence of significant bleeding risks, aspirin should be considered routinely for primary prevention of cardiovascular disease in all men and women without diabetes above the ages of 48 and 57 years, respectively.

All of the patients included in the analysis were between 30 and 74 years of age; none had diabetes. Regression techniques were used to establish the average age at which the men and women moved from low risk (<10% 10-year coronary heart disease risk) to moderate/high risk (>10% 10-year coronary heart disease risk). The transition from low to moderate/high baseline risk occurred at about age 47.8 for men and 57.3 for women.

New guidelines double the amount of Vitamin D recommended for children

Pediatrics. 2008;122:1142-52.

In a 2008 clinical report titled "Prevention of Rickets and Vitamin D Deficiency in Infants, Children, and Adolescents," the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) doubled the amount of vitamin D it recommends for infants, children, and adolescents.

The new recommended daily intake of vitamin D is 400 IU/day beginning in the first few days of life. The previous recommendation, issued in 2003, called for 200 IU/day beginning in the first 2 months of life.

According to AAP, the change in recommendation comes after reviewing new clinical trials on vitamin D and the historical precedence of safely giving 400 IU per day to the pediatric population.

Smoking rates fall, nicotine dependence rises

MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. 2008 Nov 14;57(45):1221-6.
CHEST Meeting Abstracts. 2008;134:s33002.

Fewer adults in the United States smoke, but those who do appear to be substantially more physically dependent on nicotine than in the past, according to a pair of recent reports.

An analysis of self-reported data from the National Health Interview Survey indicates that 19.8% of adults—approximately 43.4 million people—were current smokers in 2007. This represents a decrease of a full percentage point from 2006, when 20.8% of adults were current smokers. More than 13 million people stopped smoking for more than 1 day in 2007 because they were trying to quit.

Research presented at the CHEST 2008 meeting found that as many as 75% of patients currently seeking tobacco cessation treatment may be highly nicotine dependent. The authors compared nicotine-dependence severity data from three separate trials conducted between 1989 and 2006. Nicotine-dependence severity increased 12% during those years, with the proportion of patients classified as highly nicotine dependent increasing by 32%.



Updated smoking cessation guideline available

The U.S. Public Health Service has released *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: 2008 Update*, the first revision of the clinical practice guideline for smoking cessation since 2000. The guideline update and its companion products, which include a consumer guide and a pocket guide for clinicians, are available online at: <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/tobacco/default.htm>.

upcoming national health observances

May

May 1 - 31

Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
www.aafa.org

May 1 - 31

Better Sleep Month
Better Sleep Council
www.bettersleep.org

May 1 - 31

National Arthritis Awareness Month
Arthritis Foundation
www.arthritis.org

May 1 - 31

National High Blood Pressure Education Month
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Health Information Center
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

May 1 - 31

National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month
National Osteoporosis Foundation
www.nof.org

May 29

World Digestive Health Day
<http://www.worlddigestroenterology.org/wdhd-2009.html>

June

June 1 - 7

Sun Safety Week
Sun Safety Alliance
www.sunsafetyalliance.org

June 7 - 13

National Headache Awareness Week
National Headache Foundation
www.headaches.org

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