Key Inforbits

- One new drug and Plan B
- Can’t trust the pusher
- Page One for pharmacists and DI specialists!
- Exercise and diet, AGAIN
- FDA is regulating WHAT?!?
- Phishing Alert

NEW DRUGS, and other related stuff …

New Drug … nepafenac (Nevanac™ 0.1% by Alcon Laboratories) is a new ophthalmic, topical, NSAID suspension, indicated for the treatment of pain and inflammation associated with cataract surgery. It was approved by the FDA on August 19, 2005. Its general directions are to use one day prior to cataract surgery t.i.d., and continued through two weeks, postop. For approval history and labeling, go to: http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/drugsatfda/index.cfm?fuseaction=Search.SearchAction&ApplNo=021862&SearchType=AddlSearch&SEARCHOPTION=B

Plan B for Plan B, again … The FDA announced August 26, 2005 that they are taking the action of publishing an advance notice of proposed rulemaking to initiate an open public process to consider the important regulatory and policy questions raised with the Barr Laboratories application. It will speak only to the regulatory and policy issues raised by this application. According to the FDA’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER), it completed its review of this application, as amended, and has concluded that the available scientific data are sufficient to support the safe use of Plan B as an over the counter product, but only for women who are 17 years of age and older. For full text of the announcement: http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/news/2005/NEW01223.html

FROM THE MEDICAL LITERATURE …

Heroin adulteration … As if addiction to heroin isn’t bad enough, now come reports from the east coast that some sources have been adulterated with clenbuterol (a β2 agonist for veterinary use). The tip-offs were the symptoms of cardiotoxicity and associated symptoms expected of β2 agonists rather than the CNS depressant effects of opioids. Adulteration is not a new phenomenon, but this particular adulterant is. It’s getting where you can’t trust your own pusher anymore. But then again, he/she is a criminal …

http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5432a1.htm

Alcohol abuse update … The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) has published updated guidelines for assessing and treating alcoholism. Part of the update includes an expanded drug treatment section, listing the three approved drugs and
prescribing information. In addition, a newspaper article did a pretty nice review of the drug treatments available for alcoholism, including off-label and investigational agents.

NIAAA. Helping patients who drink too much: A clinician’s guide. 2005 ed. US Dept. of Health and Human Services; National Institutes of Health; National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/ (web site for The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA))

Reviews of Note …


FROM THE LAY LITERATURE about medicine …

YES, drug information skills are useful … A front page article in the Wall Street Journal on Wednesday, August 24, 2005, touted the “detective skills” of a pharmacist in California who in essence, performs drug literature reviews, evaluates the primary drug literature and provides recommendations for Kaiser’s formulary for California. These “gatekeepers” are highlighted as is their importance and impact on the six million members of the Kaiser system. As you may expect, some in the pharmaceutical industry take exception with some of the conclusions. The article is very complimentary for pharmacists and one of their roles in health care.


Fat is Alabama … A recent report focuses on the state of nutrition and obesity in the U.S. and Alabama is the 2nd heaviest state in the union, second only to Mississippi. Seven of the fattest 10 states are in the Southeast. Notice a pattern? About 27.7% of adults in Alabama are obese and when combining the definitions of obese + overweight, 63.5% of Alabamians qualify. The “skinniest” state, as a frame of reference, is Colorado. Many factors contribute such as government policies on nutrition education, physical education, insurance policies, preventive care and lack of side walks. See the complete report below.

http://healthyamericans.org/ (Trust for America’s Health)

Counterpoint … The results of the “fat survey” have been contested (big surprise) claiming invalid statistical testing, etc, etc. You be the judge.

Hellmich N. Obesity ranking of states is disputed. USA Today 2005 Aug 23.

But I don’t have time to exercise (whine)…. President Bush’s health, after his most recent medical evaluation (according to one unconfirmed source), was rated “superior” compared to
99% of American men aged 55-59 years. He has just 16% body fat and weighs 191 pounds. His resting heart rate is 47 bpm and BP is 110/64. His workouts (6 days/week) include free weight training, treadmill exercises, bicycling (15-20 miles at 15-18 mph), elliptical trainer exercises and stretching. So what is your excuse?? Submitted by Dr. Robert Smith

and Speaking of Diet … Salt limitation is still recommended for some diseases, particularly hypertension, but do you know how hard it is to achieve the sodium restrictions recommended? The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends young, healthy adults consume <2300 mg sodium/day. Hypertensive patients, elderly, etc are urged to consume <1500 mg sodium/day. Look at the web site for the latest comparisons of various prepared and packaged foods and you will see that using the salt shaker is the least of your problems.


Hospital quality? … A recent article in the New York Times highlighted two medical journal articles1,2 concerning quality of care in hospitals. Unfortunately, one of the messages is that hospitals are improving (some better than others, of course) but primarily due to the fact that someone is watching! Hospitals in the North and Northeast seemed to rank highest while Arkansas had the worse ratings. These ratings were comparing care given in certain situations (eg, heart attack, pneumonia, heart failure) where recognized standards exist. Fessenden F. It's the Simple Things, but Some Hospitals Don't Do Them. New York Times.com 2005 Aug 21. http://www.nytimes.com/2005/08/21/weekinreview/21fess.html (New York Times)


Leeches and maggots regulated … How would you like to be on this evaluation panel? After centuries of use, the attention of the FDA has turned to these medical critters (officially classified as medical devices). Discussions began this week. Leeches are used typically following limb transplant/reattachment surgery to reduce bleeding and coagulation; maggots are extremely effective wound cleansers, often used in stubborn wounds of diabetic patients. Harris G. Age-old cures, like the maggot, get U.S. hearing. New York Times 2005 Aug 25. http://www.nytimes.com/2005/08/25/health/25fda.html?pagewanted=all

Update …
Specialty residencies: Pediatrics

AUBURN HSOP FACULTY in the literature …

NEW RESOURCES in the DILRC …


TIMELY TOP TECH TIP …

✍️ **Phishing Alert** … and it’s not the next bass tournament. “Phishing” involves Internet fraudsters who send spam or pop-up messages to gain personal information (credit card numbers, bank account information, Social Security number, passwords, or other sensitive information) from you. Phishers claim to be from a business or organization that you may deal with such as an Internet service provider (ISP), bank, online payment service, or government agency. The message may ask you to “update,” “validate,” or “confirm” your account information. The messages direct you to a website that looks just like a legitimate organization’s site. But, it’s a bogus site whose sole purpose is to trick you into divulging your personal information so the operators can steal your identity and run up bills or commit crimes in your name. For a “tip sheet” from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to help you avoid these scams, go to this website (no personal information is required):


✍️ The last “dose” …

*Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend.*
*Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read.*

** Groucho Marx   [1890 – 1977]