NEW MEDICINES

Prialt

**Composition:** Ziconotide.

**Presentation:** Solution for infusion 100µg/ml.

**Action:** N-type calcium channel blocker.

**Indications:** The treatment of severe, chronic pain in patients who require intrathecal analgesia.

**Dosage:** Initiate at 2.4µg/day and titrate according to response and adverse reactions. Titrate in increments of 2.4µg per day up to a maximum of 21.6µg/day. The minimal interval between dose increases is 24 hours but 48 hours or more is recommended. Prialt should be administered by continuous infusion via an intrathecal catheter using an external or internally implanted mechanical infusion pump.

**Precautions:** Not recommended for use in patients under 18 years. Caution during long-term treatment and when administered to patients with impaired hepatic or renal function in patients receiving systemic chemotherapy. Patients and doctors should be vigilant for signs and symptoms of meningitis. Monitoring of creatinine kinase is recommended. Cognitive and neurophysiologic adverse reactions are common and the Prialt dose should be reduced or discontinued if these occur.

**Contraindications:** Prialt should not be given in combination with intrathecal chemotherapy.

**Side Effects:** Very common (>1/10): confusion, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, memory impairment, headache, blurred vision, constipation, diarrhea, dry mouth, constipation, agitation, insomnia, depression, paranoia, irritability, aggression, depression, nervousness, affect liability, mental status changes, thought blocking, abnormal dreams, aggravation of anxiety and confusion, diplopia, visual disturbance, photosensitivity, vertigo, tinnitus, orthostatic hypotension, hypotension, dyspnea, diarrhoea, dry mouth, constipation, aggravated nausea, dyspepsia, upper abdominal pain, pruritus, increased sweating, rash, limb pain, myalgia, muscle spasms, muscle cramp, muscle weakness, arthralgia, periorbital swelling, back pain, muscle twitching, neck pain, urinary retention, urinary hesitancy, dysuria, urinary incontinence, fatigue, pyrexia, lethargy, peripheral oedema, rigors, falls, chest pain, feeling cold, pain, difficulty walking, feeling jittery, exacerbation of pain, increased blood creatinine phosphokinase, increased aspartate aminotransferase, increased blood creatinine phosphokinase M, increased body temperature. Legal category: POM. Net price: £1ml vial £271.83, 5ml vial £1395.14.

**Contact Details:** Eieli Ltd, 3 Shortlands, London W6 8EE. Telephone 020 8600 1400.

PRESCRIPTION PRODUCTS

Ramipril

R amipril tablets are now available from Actavis. N et price, 28 x 2.5mg, £2.94, 28 x 5mg, £4.12, 28 x 10mg, £5.29. Legal category: POM.

Simvastatin

Simvastatin tablets are now available from Actavis. N et price, 28 x 10mg, £0.31, 28 x 20mg, £0.51, 28 x 40mg, £1.16. Legal category: POM.

SPC CHANGES

Florinef

The summary of product characteristics for Florinef (fludrocortisone; Bristol-Myers Squibb) has been updated. The interactions section now classifies medicines into drug groups and includes further details on interactions. See SPC.

PRODUCTS MISCELLANY

J uvela fresh bread

Gluten-free fresh bread is now available from Juvela. N et price, 8 x 400g white sliced loaves, £22.36. Legal category: borderline prescription. Dedicated order line: 0870 8505948.

Boots The Chemists Ltd

Recently we carried an advertisement from Lloydspharmacy (PJ, 24 June, pA3). We would like to assure readers and advertisers that it is not the policy of The Pharmaceutical Journal to carry advertisements of this nature, commonly known as “knocking copy”, from anyone. An oversight on our part meant that the advertisement slipped through our rigorous checking procedures. The advertisement will not be republished. We regret any offence caused to Boots.

Pradip Patel, Boots’s pharmacy superintendent, has supplied the following statement: “We have 4,000 dedicated pharmacists at Boots, working to deliver outstanding patient care and service to people and families that have visited us for generations. Our pharmacists work with a loyal and well-trained team of dispensers, accuracy checking technicians to deliver the service standard our patients demand. “While we acknowledge that not all employees will always be happy, we are nonetheless absolutely committed to providing the best support for our pharmacists, from class-leading continuous professional development to flexible working arrangements. “Our reputation as an employer and a pharmacy is one of which we are incredibly proud and we shall continue to care for and support all our employees and patients, whatever their circumstances. Although we are an extremely successful company, we have never stopped trying to be a better company for our people and our patients.”

Pharmacists wanting to attend the lecture can contact Eileen M on 020 7753 5819 or e-mail eileen.mok@pharmacy.ac.uk.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

APrT

A North East branch of the Association of Pharmacy Technicians U.K. has been established, with the aim of providing advice, support and continuing professional development opportunities across the region. Enquiries regarding membership can be directed to susan.mcmahon@chs.northy.nhs.uk.

FUTURE EVENTS

Public health

PharmacyHealthLink workshop to help pharmacists decide whether they wish to apply for the support programme to the U.K. Voluntary Register for Public Health Specialists as “defined specialists” in public health. Royal Pharmaceutical Society, London, 19 July. Pharmacists who would like to attend or would like further information can e-mail info@pharmacyhealthlink.org.uk.

CORRECTIONS

Parkinson’s disease

The news item about National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence guidance on Parkinson’s disease in last week’s Journal should have read dopamine agonist rather than dopamine antagonist (p7).

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