May 2015
Issue 7

RPCC Pharmacy Forum

Special Interest Articles:

- Drug-Induced Long QT Interval
- FDA approves Prestalia
- Medication errors

Did you know?

The Drug Enforcement Administration reports that two in five teenagers believe prescription drugs are safer than illegal drugs and that 30% of teenagers believe prescription painkillers are not addictive.

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Drug-Induced Long QT Interval

Drug Class	Examples
Antiarrhythmics	Amiodarone, Flecainide
Antibiotics/Antivirals	Amantadine, Azithromycin, Levofloxacin, Ciprofloxaxin, Trimethoprim-Sulfamethoxazole, Erythromycin, Clarithromycin
Antidepressants	Amitriptyline, Fluoxetine, Mirtazapine, Paroxetine, Sertraline, Citalopram, Trazodone, Venlafaxine
Antiemetics	Promethazine, Metoclopramide, Ondansetron
ADHD Agents	Amphetamine/dextroamphetamine (Adderall), Dexmethylphenidate (Focalin), Lisdexamfetamine (Vyvanse), Methylphenidate (Ritalin, Concerta)
Antifungals	Fluconazole, Ketoconazole
Antihistamines	Cetirizine, Hydroxyzine, Diphenhydramine
Antipsychotics	Aripiprazole, Haloperidol, Olanzapine, Risperidone, Ziprasidone, Quetiapine, Thioridazine
Bronchodilators	Albuterol, Salmeterol
Cardiac Agents	Norepinephrine, Dopamine, Epinephrine, Phenylephrine
Decongestants	Pseudoephedrine, Phenylephrine
Opioids	Methadone, Oxycodone

FDA Approves Prestalia for Hypertension

Prestalia is the first FDA-approved, single pill, fixed-dose combination of angiotensin coverting enzyme inhibitor (perindopril arginine), and calcium channel blocker (amlodipine besylate). It may be used in patients whose blood pressure is not adequately controlled on monotherapy. **Prestalia** may be used as initial therapy if a patient is likely to need multiple drugs to achieve their blood pressure goals.

Treatment should be initiated at 3.5/2.5 mg, once daily. Adjust dose according to blood pressure goals waiting 1 to 2 weeks between titration steps. Dosage forms and strengths are: 3.5/2.5 mg, 7/5 mg and 14/10 mg tablets.

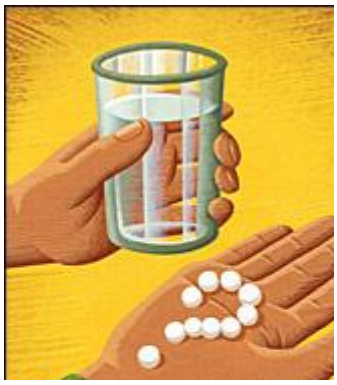
Medication Errors Linked to Drug Name Confusion

Approximately 25% of medication errors reported to national medication error reporting programs result from confusion with drug names that look or sound alike. The most serious errors reported due to similar names involve high alert medications. Insulin products were involved in 9% of the reports, and 21% involved opiate narcotics. Six percent (6%) of all reports of name confusion occurred between alprazolam (XANAX) and lorazepam (ATIVAN).

Examples of error reports:

- DILAUDID (hydromorphone) and DURAMORPH (morphine)
- Insulin products
- AVANDIA (rosiglitazone) and COUMADIN (warfarin)
- KLONOPIN (clonazepam) and clonidine (CATAPRES)
- LAMISIL (terbinafine) and LAMICTAL (lamotrigine)
- CELEBREX(celecoxib) and CELEXA (citalopram)
- GLUCOPHAGE (metformin) and FLAGYL (metronidazole)
- ULTRAM (tramadol), DESYREL (trazodone), and KETOROLAC(toradol)
- VISTARIL (hydroxyzine), APRESOLINE (hydralazine) and HYDRODIURIL (hydrochlorothiazide)

“Six percent (6%) of all reports of name confusion occurred between alprazolam (XANAX) and lorazepam (ATIVAN).”



FDA Okays Saphris for Pediatric Bipolar Disorder

FDA approval of **asenapine** (Saphris) for treatment of manic or mixed episodes associated with bipolar I disorder in pediatric patients 10 to 17 years of age. This is the first atypical antipsychotic to be approved for pediatric patients with bipolar I disorder in the last five years; it is the only formulation available in a sublingual form. The black-cherry flavored tablets will be available in the second quarter of 2015 in 2.5-, 5-, and 10-mg tablets. Saphris must be dissolved in the mouth. It won’t work if it’s swallowed because too much of it is metabolized in first pass through the liver. Saphris is a good option when patients have trouble with swallowing.

Asenapine is similar to other atypical antipsychotic agents, in that it has a lower propensity to produce extrapyramidal effects. It does have alpha-1-adrenergic antagonist activity which may produce hypotension and other hemodynamic effects in overdose.