



DRUGS THAT LOST PATENT PROTECTION

DECEMBER 2007

ZYRTEC	cetirizine hydrochloride	Antihistamine
DOVONEX	calcipotriene	(Topical Vit. D) Psoriasis
KYTRIL	granisetron hydrochloride	Nausea/Vomitting (Chemotherapy)
TACLONEX	betamethasone dipropionate; calcipotriene hydrate	Psoriasis

JANUARY 2008

CHILDREN'S ADVIL	ibuprofen	Fever Reducer, Pain
TECZEM	diltiazem malate; enalapril maleate	Antihypertensive

DISCONTINUING A BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICATION

The following drug will be discontinued:
LEXXEL (enalapril maleate-felodipine ER) Tablets
 There are no plans to manufacture after July 31,2008

COMMENT: Check your claims to ensure that you are paying for generics, and that patients are paying generic copays.

VYTORIN STUDY RESULTS WITHHELD

SAFERx 2007 – Licensing Drug Reps

On Jan. 8th the Washington DC Council voted 7-6 to pass the “SafeRx Act of 2007”. This legislation will make DC the first jurisdiction in the country to license pharmaceutical sales representatives. The goal is to presumably protect doctors and patients from disreputable agents who help drive up the costs of prescription drugs.

The SafeRx Act of 2007 bans reps from using a doctor’s prescription data for marketing without the doctor’s knowledge. At issue is the concern that industry reps, whose salary is dependent on sales, can mislead doctors and patients into buying the most expensive drugs on the market, shunning reasonably priced generics or drugs that could be just as effective.

Additionally, a pharmacy board will be formed and will create a code of ethics for salespeople and license them. The reps will have to be college grads and will be prohibited from using titles that could lead docs to think they are licensed to practice medicine, pharmacy, nursing, or in other health fields.

COMMENT: It will be interesting to watch if this becomes a national trend.

HAVE YOU VISITED THE PRO PHARMA WEBSITE LATELY?

The PhRMA industry is buzzing about a progress report on a Vytorin study called ENHANCE, which was completed in April 2006 but never released, prompting all sorts of speculation about the findings. An expert panel recommended changing the study endpoint to speed things along.

An 18-month mystery is fueling the speculation, and then a possible changing of the endpoint only raises the possibility that a permanent question mark will remain over the results. Now Congress is probing their decision. In a letter released recently, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce worries aloud about “manipulation of trial data” and is asking the drugmakers to explain themselves and supply all records.

COMMENT: Alert your physician panel to be wary of any claims about Vytorin until this issue is resolved.

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If you have any questions, please contact Carol Stern at (888) 701-5438, Ext. 715.

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