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# Pharmacy Benefit News

From Pro Pharma



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Issue #99 | Feb 21, 2008

## DRUGS THAT LOST PATENT PROTECTION

Check your formularies to ensure that your members can take advantage of generic copays.

February 2008		
BRAND NAME	GENERIC NAME	INDICATION
FOSAMAX	alendronate sodium	Prevents Bone Loss
FOSAMAX PLUS D	alendronate sodium; cholecalciferol	Prevents Bone Loss
CIPRO HC	ciprofloxacin hydrochloride; hydrocortisone	Antibiotic
CIPRODEX	ciprofloxacin; dexamethasone	Ear Infection
INSPRA	eplerenone	High Blood Pressure
DEPOCYT	cytarabine	Leukemia & Lymphoma
DEPODUR	morphine sulfate	Pain
CAMPTOSAR	irinotecan hydrochloride	Chemotherapy

## ORTHO EVRA PATCH – SAFETY ISSUES

The label now includes the results of a new epidemiology study that found that users of the birth control patch were at 2x higher risk of developing serious blood clots, also known as venous thromboembolism (VTE), than women using birth control pills. VTE can lead to pulmonary embolism. The label changes are based on a study of women

## DULOXETINE (CYMBALTA) CLAIMS OVERESTIMATE EFFECT ON PAIN IN DEPRESSION

Glen Spielmans, a psychology professor at Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minnesota, conducted a meta-analysis of five published studies that examined Cymbalta and pain relief in depressed patients.

“The results indicate a very small and statistically nonsignificant analgesic effect... Additionally, some of the relevant data on (Cymbalta’s) effects have not been reported fully, making it likely that the obtained results reflect an overestimate of its true impact on painful physical symptoms in depression,” he wrote in *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*. “Based upon the currently available evidence, the marketing of (Cymbalta) as an antidepressant with analgesic properties for people with depression does not appear to be adequately supported.”

**COMMENT:** Review your formulary guidelines and ask for a review of the current use of Duloxetine. Insist upon evidence-based reviews for inclusion and uses of drugs for your benefits and formularies.

## ARE YOU OVER SPENDING ON PHARMACY BENEFIT COSTS AND WANT TO KEEP DRUG TREND AT SINGLE DIGIT OR LESS?

Pro Pharma’s Quality Management Program™ is proven in markets nationwide to increase

between 15 and 44 years old that was conducted by the Boston Collaborative Drug Surveillance Program on behalf of Johnson and Johnson. These recent findings support an earlier study that also said women in this group were at higher risk for VTE.

**COMMENT:** Review your formulary and use of the patch for birth control. Consider informing your members of the potential problem with the patch.

### **PBM COURT SETTLEMENT**

**Caremark, the pharmacy benefits manager, has agreed to pay \$38.5 million in a multistate settlement of claims** noting that it was deceptive when it encouraged patients to switch prescription drugs under the guise of saving money. (Ref – Associated Press) Instead, Caremark kept rebates and discounts that it should have passed on to patients and employers, according to Pennsylvania Attorney General Tom Corbett. He also stated that the PBM didn't adequately explain to physicians how switching drugs would affect what a patient would pay.

**COMMENT:** These issues are not uncommon. Make sure that in your annual audits of your PBM that you ask questions about policies and procedures related to rebate collection based on **earned**, not collected, rebates.

quality outcomes and decrease costs associated with managing the Pharmacy Benefit, which puts dollars back in your pocket. Our methodology is to integrate therapeutics with prudent business principles to achieve cost contraction as a result of improved quality management. Savings accrue from Physician-accepted General Education about Evidence-Based practice and information about the cost-effectiveness of competing medication.

**This results in decreased Trend relative to the national average and a minimum ROI of 2:1 in savings to your organization.**

If you are interested in having additional information, please refer to our website at [www.propharmaconsultants.com](http://www.propharmaconsultants.com) or contact Carol Stern at (888) 701-5438, Ext. 715.

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**Pro Pharma Pharmaceutical Consultants, Inc. has assisted Payers and Providers for over 22 years to Maintain Quality while Controlling Costs.**