



Tablet Press

The prescribing newsletter for GPs, nurses and pharmacists in
Northamptonshire Primary Care Trust



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- **CV risks of rosiglitazone**

The latest MeReC Extra gives an excellent summary of the evidence and concerns regarding rosiglitazone.
http://www.npc.nhs.uk/MeReC_Extra/2008/pdfs/MeReC_Extra_No29.pdf

- **ACE inhibitors and angiotensin II receptor blockers in combination?**

The Northern and Yorkshire Regional Drug and Therapeutics Centre has published a Drug Update bulletin looking at the evidence for the use of ACE inhibitors and angiotensin II receptor blockers in combination. The update concludes: There is a lack of evidence to support the use of ACE inhibitor/ARB combination therapy in hypertension. Optimal blood pressure control is important and should be achieved using the treatment algorithm proposed in the NICE hypertension guidelines. Beneficial effects on morbidity and mortality of ACE inhibitor/ARB combination therapy in the treatment of renal disease have not been consistently demonstrated. Routine use of ACE inhibitor/ARB combination therapy is not recommended and should be reserved for patients with resistant congestive heart failure or renal disease, or severe unresponsive hypertension, following specialist advice.

http://www.nyrdtc.nhs.uk/docs/dud/DU_54_ACE_ARB_combination_final.pdf

- **Clopidogrel – duration information on discharge**

Both KGH and NGH have agreed through the quality schedules of the Service Level Agreements that duration of treatment with clopidogrel must be stated on the discharge information. Can we please encourage practices to complete Schedule 3c feedback forms where this does not happen, so that we can keep up pressure on the acute trusts to get this right in the interests of patient safety and cost-effectiveness.

http://www.northants.nhs.uk/Clinical_Care14070/Left_Menu/Prescribing/Monitoring_Discharge/feedback.doc

- **What about Omacor?**

We have received a number of requests for clarity about the place of Omacor since the NICE post-MI guidance was published.

It does not appear in the drug therapy section at all but the lifestyle section recommends advising patients to consume at least 7g of omega-3 fatty acids per week from two to four portions of oily fish. (*Omega-3 can also be obtained from fortified foodstuff, such as margarine*). It suggests providing at least 1g daily of omega-3 acid ethyl esters licensed for secondary prevention post-MI (*this is Omacor*) for patients who have had an MI within 3 months and are not achieving 7g of omega-3 fatty acids per week. The guideline says to not routinely initiate omega-3-acid ethyl esters supplements for patients who have had an MI more than 3 months earlier. Hence we would expect to see only limited prescribing of Omacor.

- **CPN prescribers can now prescribe nystatin 'off-label' for oral thrush in neonates**

The Department of Health has updated information in the non-medical prescribing part of its website, regarding the prescribing of medicines by Community Practitioner Nurses (CPNs). CPN Prescribers should not prescribe medicines 'off-label', but due to an unprecedented decision the one exception to this as of the 1st August 2007 is nystatin for oral thrush in neonates.

CPN Prescribers may prescribe nystatin 'off-label' for neonates, at the dose recommended in the Children's BNF, as long as they are absolutely clear that the diagnosis is oral thrush. They should only prescribe nystatin off-label within their own competence, and when doing so they accept clinical and medico-legal responsibility for prescribing that medicine. This exception has been permitted on the basis that there is no systemic absorption of the product and the use of the product in treatment of oral thrush is long-established. The guidance stresses that there are no other exceptions for off-label prescribing by CPN Prescribers.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Policyandguidance/Medicinespharmacyandindustry/Prescriptions/TheNon-MedicalPrescribingProgramme/Nurseprescribing/DH_4123003

This edition is also available on HNN (Health Network Northants)

<http://www.northants.nhs.uk/Display/Dynamic.jsp?topid=14070&lhsid=514&oid=2854¤tid=2854>

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