



# Tablet Press

The prescribing newsletter for GPs, nurses and pharmacists  
NHS Nene CCG and NHS Corby CCG



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- **COPD: risk of pneumonia with ICS**

Further to the PATHOS study reported in last month's Tablet Press, an observational study reports similar conclusions. <http://thorax.bmj.com/content/68/11/1029.full>

"ICS use by patients with COPD increases the risk of serious pneumonia. The risk is particularly elevated and dose related with fluticasone. While residual confounding cannot be ruled out, the results are consistent with those from recent randomised trials".

- **Current high cost of senna tablets**

Senna tablets are one of our first-line formulary choices for the treatment of constipation, along with bisacodyl. The cost of senna tablets has risen considerably of late to over £10 for 60 tablets and we therefore advise prescribers to use bisacodyl instead where possible; this currently costs £3.43 for 100. A reminder message has been put on Scriptswitch.

We will continue to monitor the price of senna tablets and will update you if and when the price falls.

- **New Oral Anticoagulants (NOACs) – risk of serious haemorrhage**

The MHRA have clarified that the contra-indications previously identified for dabigatran apply to all 3 NOACs (dabigatran, rivaroxaban and apixaban). They also highlight the fact that there is no specific antidote for any of these 3 NOACs and that the product information should be consulted in the event of bleeding complications.

<http://www.mhra.gov.uk/home/groups/dsu/documents/publication/con322740.pdf>

- **Which medicines should be considered for brand-name prescribing in primary care?**

UK Medicines Information have produced a very useful fact-sheet on medicines where it is important to prescribe by brand name rather than generic.

[Which medicines should be considered for brand-name prescribing in primary care?](#)

- **Type 2 diabetes: study finds no benefit from saxagliptin on cardiovascular outcomes**

A large randomised controlled trial has found that adding saxagliptin to other blood-glucose-lowering medication did not reduce the risk of cardiovascular events or some renal outcomes at around 2 years. However, saxagliptin increased the risk of hypoglycaemia and may also have increased the risk of admission to hospital because of heart failure.

[Medicines Evidence Commentary : Type 2 diabetes: study finds no benefit from saxagliptin on cardiovascular outcomes](#)

- **Supply shortage with Jext (adrenaline) 300 mcg autoinjector**

There is a supply shortage with Jext 300 mcg for the next 4-6 weeks. The out of stock situation will not affect existing patients, unless they have cause to use their device, as the next batch due to expire is in February 2014.

- **'Flu vaccination**

The uptake of 'flu vaccination in Northamptonshire, although reasonable in the over-65s, has historically not been high in the "at risk" groups. All healthcare professionals can encourage patients to have the 'flu vaccination and community pharmacists are probably in a particularly good situation to do so.

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/who-should-have-flu-vaccine.aspx>

- **Antibiotic use**

A timely and sobering reminder of the over-use of antibiotics and the risk of antibiotic resistance was screened on Tonight on ITV on 24<sup>th</sup> October. If you missed it you can find it on ITV player

<https://www.itv.com/itvplayer/tonight/series-17/episode-32-when-the-drugs-don-t-work-tonight>

This edition is also available on PathfinderRF via the following link <http://nww.pathfinder-rf.northants.nhs.uk/nene>  
and on the Nene CCG and Corby CCG websites

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