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New Auralgan® Formulation

Auralgan® Otic Solution has been re-formulated by its manufacturer, Deston Therapeutics, and now contains acetic acid and U-polycosanol 410 in addition to antipyrine and benzocaine. Acetic acid has been added for its antibacterial and antifungal effects and U-polycosanol 410 is being used as an astringent instead of alcohol. The original formulation of Auralgan® is no longer available; however, generic antipyrine/benzocaine products continue to be available. The generic products as well as the new Auralgan® formulation also contain glycerin. Benzocaine is a local anesthetic and antipyrine is an analgesic and anti-inflammatory. In addition to being marketed for acute otitis externa (swimmer's ear) and ear wax removal, the new Auralgan® otic formulation is also being marketed as an adjunct to systemic antibiotics to relieve pain and reduce inflammation due to acute otitis media. Auralgan®, in its original formulation, was a "grandfathered" drug that was never officially approved by the FDA and neither has the new formulation been FDA approved. Therefore, there are no FDA recommended therapeutic equivalents. It is unclear whether the new formulation of Auralgan® offers any benefits. If a topical analgesic is needed, generic antipyrine/benzocaine products offer a cost-effective therapy.

Sources:

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Generic Bupropion XL 300 mg and Wellbutrin® XL 300 mg

During the first six months of 2007, the FDA received 85 post-marketing reports of undesirable effects following a change in therapy from Wellbutrin™ XL 300 mg to Teva's bupropion formulation, Budeprion™ XL 300 mg. Loss of antidepressant effect following the switch from brand to generic product was specifically reported in 78 of the cases. A number of cases also reported new onset or worsening of side effects. In order to evaluate these post-marketing reports, the FDA re-examined both the data on bioequivalence of the two products and information related to the natural history of treated depression. At the conclusion of their review, the FDA considers the Teva generic form of bupropion XL 300 mg bioequivalent and therapeutically equivalent to (interchangeable with) Wellbutrin® XL 300 mg. Although there are small differences in the pharmacokinetic profiles of these two formulations, they are not outside the established boundaries for equivalence nor are they different from other bupropion products known to be effective. A scientifically reasonable explanation for lack of efficacy reports following a switch from the brand product to the generic product is the recurrent nature of major depressive disorder (MDD) which the drugs are used to treat. The adverse effects reported following a switch were relatively few in number and typical of adverse drug effects reported in drug and placebo groups in most clinical trials. The FDA continues to monitor closely reports of therapeutic inequivalence and adverse events.

Drug Information Highlights

- **Abacavir (Ziagen®) and Didanosine (Videx®)**: The FDA has issued an Early Communication related to recent findings of The Data Collection on Adverse Events of Anti-HIV Drugs Study indicating there may be a higher risk of heart attack in patients with HIV-1 infection taking abacavir or didanosine as part of their drug therapy regimen. The FDA will continue to evaluate the overall risks and benefits of these medications and until their review is complete, health care professionals should evaluate the potential risks and benefits of the antiretroviral drugs their patients are utilizing.
- **Becaplermin (Regranex®) Gel**: The FDA is conducting a safety review based on study data that there may be an increased risk of death from cancer in diabetic patients using Regranex® Gel, a skin product used to heal leg and foot ulcers. The FDA review is ongoing and conclusions and recommendations will be communicated as soon as FDA review is complete.
- **Carbenicillin indanyl sodium (Geocillin®) Tablets 382 mg**: Pfizer has discontinued manufacture of this product. There are currently no other FDA approved manufacturers for carbenicillin tablets.
- **Montelukast (Singulair®)**: The FDA is investigating a possible association between the use of montelukast, a leukotriene receptor antagonist for treatment of asthma and symptoms of allergic rhinitis, and behavior/mood changes, suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) and suicide. Merck & Co., Inc. has updated the prescribing information for this product over the past year to include post-marketing adverse events including tremor, depression, suicidality and anxiousness. Merck plans to highlight recent changes in prescribing information for montelukast to prescribers in face-to-face communication and to provide them with patient information leaflets. The FDA estimates that it may take up to nine months to complete ongoing evaluations.
- **Mycophenolate mofetil (CellCept®) and Mycophenolate sodium (Myfortic®)**: The FDA is investigating a potential association between the use of CellCept® and Myfortic®, medications used to prevent organ rejection, and development of progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML), a life-threatening disease. PML is a rare disorder that affects the central nervous system (CNS) and it usually occurs in patients with suppressed immune systems due to disease or medication. FDA review may take up to two months.
- **Fexofenadine (Allegra®) 30 mg Oral Tablets**: Sanofi-Aventis has discontinued the manufacture of Allegra 30 mg oral tablets as of 03-31-2008. There are no plans to discontinue the 60 mg tablets and the 30 mg ODT (orally disintegrating tablets) are still available.

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- **Calcitonin-salmon (Miacalcin® & Fortical® Nasal Sprays)**: After identifying formulation differences between these products, the FDA has established that Fortical® Nasal Spray is NOT an AB-rated equivalent product to Miacalcin® Nasal Spray. The formulations include different excipients which may produce different allergic or immunogenic responses. Also, their storage conditions differ. Miacalcin® may be stored at room temperature for up to 35 days while Fortical® may be stored at room temperature for up to 30 days. These products are substitutable only in accordance to individual state laws. Substitution may require a new prescription be obtained.
- **Oxycodone Tablets**: Immediate-release oxycodone tablets are now available from Ethex in 10 mg and 20 mg dosage strengths.
- **Testosterone, Topical (AndroGel® 1% and Testim® 1% Gel/Jelly)**: Topical testosterone 1% formulations which are NOT deemed substitutable. Both are indicated for testosterone replacement therapy in adult males for conditions with a deficiency or absence of endogenous testosterone. Both may be applied to intact skin of the shoulder or upper arm. AndroGel® may also be applied to the abdomen. Neither product may be applied to the genitals.

FDA Approved New Molecular Entities (NMEs), Biologic Products (BLAs)/Orphan Drugs and New Indications/New Formulations for Existing Products

Generic Name	Trade Name	Description	Applicant	FDA Status
Rotavirus vaccine	Rotarix®	Live, oral vaccine in a liquid formulation to be given in a two-dose series to infants from six to 24 weeks of age indicated for the prevention of rotavirus gastroenteritis caused by G1 and non-G1 types (G3, G4, and G9).	GlaxoSmithKline	FDA approved new vaccine 04-03-2008
Regadenoson	Lexiscan®	Adenosine A2A-receptor agonist approved for use as a pharmacologic stress agent in patients unable to exercise adequately for radionuclide myocardial perfusion imaging. Regadenoson, by activation of the A2A receptor, dilates coronary blood vessels to temporarily increase blood flow through the coronary arteries to mimic the effect of exercise for diagnostic testing.	CV Therapeutics	FDA approved 04-10-2008
Olopatadine hydrochloride	Patanase® Nasal Spray	Relatively selective histamine H1-antagonist now approved as a nasal spray indicated for patients 12 years of age and older for relief of symptoms of seasonal allergic rhinitis.	Alcon	FDA approved new formulation 04-15-2008
Sumatriptan/ naproxen sodium	Treximet®	A 5-HT1 serotonin receptor antagonist (triptan) in combination with a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) indicated for the acute treatment of migraine attacks with or without aura in adults. Treximet® contains 85 mg sumatriptan and 500 mg naproxen sodium.	GlaxoSmithKline & Pozen, Inc.	FDA approved new drug combination 04-15-2008
Certolizumab pegol	Cimzia®	Tumor necrosis factor (TNF) blocker indicated for adults with moderate to severe Crohn's disease who have not responded to conventional therapies. Cimzia® is available in an injectable formulation to be administered every two weeks for the first three injections. When benefit is established, it should be administered once every four weeks.	UCB, Inc.	FDA approved 04-22-2008
Risedronate sodium	Actonel®	Oral bisphosphonate now approved in a once per month dosage of 150 mg for treatment and prevention of postmenopausal osteoporosis.	Procter & Gamble	FDA approved new formulation 04-22-2008
Lisdexamfetamine dimesylate	Vyvanse®	Prodrug CNS stimulant rapidly absorbed and converted to dextroamphetamine now approved for treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in adults.	Shire Pharmaceuticals	FDA approved new age indication 04-23-2008
Bupropion hydrobromide	Aplenzin®	An aminoketone class antidepressant that weakly inhibits the neuronal uptake of dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin and is now approved in an alcohol-resistant formulation of a hydrobromide salt for treatment of depression in adults. Available dosage strengths include 174, 348, and 522 mg extended-release tablets.	Biovail Labs International	FDA approved new salt derivative 04-23-2008
Methylnaltrexone bromide	Relistor®	An injectable medication indicated to help restore bowel function in patients with late-stage, advanced illness who are receiving opioids on a continuous basis to help alleviate their pain. The drug acts by blocking opioid entrance into the cells thus allowing the bowels to continue to function normally. It can be administered as needed, but not to exceed one dose in a 24 hour period. It is not recommended for patients with known or suspected intestinal obstructions.	Progenics Pharma	FDA approved NME 04-24-2008