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Priority Review: Acetavance™

Cadence Pharmaceuticals, Inc. has learned that its New Drug Application (NDA) for Acetavance™, intravenous acetaminophen, has been accepted for filing by the FDA and designated for Priority Review. It is an investigational product candidate for treatment of acute pain and fever in adults and children. The action date issued by the FDA is November 13, 2009. Cadence acquired exclusive rights to Acetavance™ in the United States and Canada in 2006 from Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, which markets the product in Europe and other parts of the world as Perfalgan®. Intravenous acetaminophen is approved in approximately 80 countries, including major European markets.

Electronic Cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes, or "e-cigarettes", are battery-operated devices that generally contain cartridges filled with nicotine, flavor and other chemicals. The devices turn nicotine into a vapor inhaled by the users. The products, marketed and sold on-line and in shopping malls, have not been evaluated or approved by the FDA.

Sources:

www.fda.gov
www.thomsonhc.com
www.medscape.com
www.PTCommunity.com
ajp.psychiatryonline.org

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Vaccine Approved for 2009-2010 Seasonal Influenza

The 2009-2010 seasonal influenza vaccine has been approved by the FDA. It will not protect against the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus that resulted in the declaration of a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on June 11, 2009. The vaccine is still important for Americans for whom it is recommended. It will contain an A/Brisbane/59/2007 (H1N1)-like virus, an A/Brisbane/10/2007 (H3N2)-like virus and a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus and will be available in six brand names to include Afluria® (CSL Limited), Fluarix® (GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals), FluLaval® (ID Biomedical Corporation), Fluvirin® (Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics Limited) Fluzone® (Sanofi Pasteur Inc), and FluMist® (MedImmune Vaccines Inc). The FDA continues to work with manufacturers, international partners, and other government agencies to facilitate the availability of a safe and effective vaccine against the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus.

Drug Information Highlights

- **Zicam® Cold Remedy Nasal Gel and Zicam® Cold Remedy Gel Swabs (intranasal zinc)**: Matrixx Initiatives Inc. voluntarily recalled these products when the FDA notified consumers and healthcare professionals in June 2009 to discontinue use of these products, sold over-the-counter as cold remedies, because they were associated with the loss of sense of smell (anosmia) that may be long-lasting or permanent. The FDA has received reports that involve either the loss of sense of smell after the first dose or after multiple uses of the products.
- **Leukotriene Inhibitors: Singulair® (montelukast), Accolate® (zafirlukast), Zyflo®/Zyflo CR® (zileuton)**: The FDA requested in June 2009 that manufacturers include a precaution in the labeling for these products. The FDA recommends that patients and healthcare professionals should be aware of the potential for neuropsychiatric events associated with these medications, patients should talk to their healthcare providers should these events occur, and discontinuing these medications should be considered if neuropsychiatric conditions develop. Although some reports have included clinical details consistent with a drug-induced effect, available clinical trial data are limited.
- **Levemir® Insulin**: Some stolen vials of Levemir® insulin made by Novo Nordisk Inc. have reappeared and are being sold in the United States market. Patients and healthcare professionals should be alerted not to use Levemir® insulin from the following lots that may not have been stored and handled properly; and therefore, may be dangerous for use: XZF0036, XZF0037, and XZF0038.
- **Smoking Cessation Aids: Chantix® (varenicline) and Zyban®/generics (bupropion)**: The FDA is requiring new Boxed Warnings and Medication Guides to be developed to highlight the risk of serious neuropsychiatric symptoms in patients using these products. These symptoms include changes in behavior, hostility, agitation, depressed mood, suicidal thoughts and behavior, and attempted suicide. The same changes will be required for bupropion products (Wellbutrin®/generics) indicated for treatment of depression and seasonal affective disorder.
- **Darvon® and Darvocet® (propoxyphene-containing medications)**: Data linking propoxyphene and fatal overdoses have caused the FDA to add a boxed warning to emphasize overdose potential and to require a Medication Guide for these pain medications. The FDA is also requiring a new safety study to assess unanswered questions about the effects of propoxyphene on the heart at doses higher than those recommended.
- **Xolair® (omalizumab)**: The FDA is evaluating interim safety findings from an ongoing Xolair® study, Evaluating the Clinical Effectiveness and Long-Term Safety in Patients with Moderate to Severe Asthma (EXCELS), that suggest a disproportionate increase in ischemic heart disease, arrhythmias, cardiomyopathy and cardiac failure, pulmonary hypertension, cerebrovascular disorders, and embolic, thrombotic and thrombophlebitic events in Xolair®-treated patients as compared to a patient control group not given the drug. The FDA is not recommending prescribing information changes or advising patients to stop using the drug. Until study evaluation is completed, patients and providers should be aware of risks and benefits and the new information that may suggest cardiovascular and cerebrovascular adverse events.

- **Stimulant Medications in Children with ADHD**: A case-control study published in the American Journal of Psychiatry (AJP) suggests there may be a link between use of stimulant drugs for ADHD and sudden cardiac death in healthy children. The authors of the study, funded by the FDA with the National Institutes of Health, acknowledge several limitations with the study, and note that it cannot be concluded that the study data affect the overall risk-benefit profile of stimulant medications used in children to treat ADHD. The FDA will continue to review all available data and is also co-sponsoring a large study, in partnership with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), which is evaluating the potential risk of heart attack, stroke, or other cardiovascular problems associated with stimulant medication use in children. Findings are expected later in 2009. The FDA has said that parents and caregivers should not discontinue use of these medications based on the study but recommends that they should discuss concerns with the prescriber of the medication(s).

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
Ferumoxytol	Feraheme™	Superparamagnetic iron oxide, coated with polyglucose sorbitol carboxymethylether, formulated with mannitol, in a preservative-free aqueous colloidal injectable product for treatment of iron deficiency anemia in adults with chronic kidney disease.	Amag Pharms Inc	FDA approved new noncovalent derivative 06-30-2009
Dronedarone	Multaq®	Non-iodinated amiodarone analogue, antiarrhythmic drug indicated to reduce the risk of cardiovascular hospitalization in patients with paroxysmal or persistent atrial fibrillation (AF)/atrial flutter (AFL), with a recent episode of AF/AFL and associated cardiovascular risk factors who are in sinus rhythm or who will be cardioverted. Prior to initiating therapy with dronedarone, strong CYP3A4 inhibitors and Class I or III antiarrhythmics must be discontinued. Multaq® is available in a 400 mg tablet to be given twice daily with meals.	Sanofi Aventis	FDA approved NME 07-01-2009
Levonorgestrel	Plan B One-Step™	Progestin-only emergency contraceptive, now approved in a 1.5 mg tablet, to be taken orally, one time, as soon as possible within 72 hours after unprotected intercourse, for prevention of pregnancy. The product is available only by prescription for women younger than 17 years of age and over-the-counter for women 17 years of age and older.	Duramed	FDA approved new dosage strength/regimen 07-10-2009
Prasugrel	Effient®	Platelet aggregation inhibitor indicated for the reduction of thrombotic cardiovascular events, including stent thrombosis, in patients with acute coronary syndrome (ACS) who are to be managed with percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), an artery-opening procedure. Effient® is available in a 5 and 10 mg tablet to be given as a once daily dose after an initial loading dose.	Eli Lilly	FDA approved NME 07-10-2009
Sumatriptan Injection	Sumavel DosePro™	Selective 5-HT1 serotonin receptor agonist indicated for the acute treatment of migraine (with or without aura) and cluster headache and now available in a 6 mg/0.5 mL injection in a pre-filled, single-use, disposable, needle-free delivery system.	Zogenix Inc	FDA approved new formulation 07-15-2009
Fentanyl	Onsolis®	Opioid analgesic indicated only for the management of breakthrough pain in cancer patients, 18 years of age and older, who are already receiving and are tolerant to opioid therapy for their underlying persistent cancer pain. The drug is now available in a buccal soluble film in strengths of 200, 400, 600, 800, and 1200 mcg. All patients must begin treatment with one 200 mcg film. Patients switching from another oral transmucosal fentanyl product must be started at not greater than a 200 mcg dose of Onsolis®. Patients cannot be switched from another oral transmucosal fentanyl product on a mcg per mcg basis. When multiple films are required for an adequate dose, they should not be placed on top of each other but may be placed on both sides of the mouth.	Biodelivery Sciences International	FDA approved new formulation 07-16-2009