

# August **MIMS** Monthly Medicine Update

## NEW PRODUCTS

Aloxi (**palonosetron hydrochloride**) is a selective serotonin subtype 3 (5-HT<sub>3</sub>) receptor antagonist with anti-emetic and antinausea effects. It is indicated for the prevention of nausea and vomiting induced by cytotoxic chemotherapy. The recommended dose is 250 µg administered as a single dose approximately 30 minutes before the start of chemotherapy. Aloxi 250 µg /5 mL solution for injection is available as a single pack of 1 vial.

Azarga eye drops (**brinzolamide + timolol maleate**) is a combination suspension. These two components decrease elevated intraocular pressure (IOP) primarily by reducing aqueous humour secretion, but do so by different mechanisms of action. Brinzolamide exhibits a high affinity for and is a potent inhibitor of human carbonic anhydrase II (CA-II). Timolol is a non-selective beta-blocker that has no significant intrinsic sympathomimetic, direct myocardial depressant or local anaesthetic (membrane-stabilising) activity. Azarga eye drops are indicated for the reduction of intraocular pressure (IOP) in patients with open-angle glaucoma or ocular hypertension for whom monotherapy with either component provides insufficient IOP reduction. Azarga is contraindicated in patients with a history of hypersensitivity to brinzolamide and other sulphonamides, timolol, other

beta-blockers or any other component of the medication; bronchial asthma, a history of bronchial asthma, or severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; severe allergic rhinitis and bronchial hyperreactivity; sinus bradycardia, second or third degree atrioventricular block, overt cardiac failure, or cardiogenic shock; hyperchloraemic acidosis; severe renal impairment. The recommended dose is one drop of Azarga in the conjunctival sac of the affected eye(s) twice daily. Azarga is available on prescription as a 8 mL drop-tainer dispenser containing 5 mL suspension of brinzolamide (1%) and timolol (0.5% as timolol maleate).

Cimzia (**certolizumab pegol**) is a recombinant, humanised antibody Fab fragment that is expressed in an *Escherichia coli* bacterial expression system, subsequently purified and conjugated to polyethylene glycol (PEG). Certolizumab pegol selectively neutralises and has a high affinity for human TNF $\alpha$  and was shown to neutralise membrane associated and soluble human TNF $\alpha$  in a dose-dependent manner. Cimzia is indicated for the treatment of moderate to severe active rheumatoid arthritis (RA) in adult patients combined with methotrexate (MTX) in case of either an inadequate response or intolerance to previous therapy with one or more disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs) or as monotherapy in case

of a contraindication or intolerance to MTX. Cimzia is contraindicated in active tuberculosis or other severe infections such as sepsis or opportunistic infections; concurrent administration of Cimzia and anakinra (an interleukin-1 receptor antagonist) and moderate to severe heart failure (NYHA classes III/IV). There is no experience with the use of Cimzia in children or adolescents below 18 years of age. Cimzia treatment should be initiated and supervised by specialist physicians experienced in the diagnosis and treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. Cimzia is administered by subcutaneous injection at a dose of 400 mg in adults (2 x 200 mg subcutaneous injections) at weeks 0, 2 and 4, then 200 mg every 2 weeks or 400 mg every 4 weeks. Cimzia is available as 200 mg/1 mL in a single use pre-filled glass syringe (2's) in a carton with 2 alcohol pads.

Targin contains **oxycodone hydrochloride** (a full opioid receptor agonist) and **naloxone hydrochloride dehydrate**. Targin is indicated in the management of moderate to severe chronic pain unresponsive to non-narcotic analgesia. The naloxone component is indicated for the therapy and/or prophylaxis of opioid-induced constipation. Targin is contraindicated in situations where opioids are contraindicated including concurrent administration of MAO-inhibitors and for 2 weeks after their cessation. The

analgesic efficacy of Targin tablets is equivalent to OxyContin tablets. The usual starting dose for adults and children over 12 years who are opioid-naïve or patients presenting with moderate to severe chronic pain uncontrolled by weaker opioids is one Targin tablet 10/5 mg at 12 hour intervals, or one Targin tablet 5/25 mg at 12 hour intervals for patients with mild hepatic impairment or renal impairment. Targin is available on prescription as 5/25mg, 10/5 mg, 20/10 mg, 40/20 mg controlled release tablets (20's).

## NEW INDICATIONS

Roferon-A (**interferon alfa-2a**) is now indicated in advanced and/or metastatic renal cell carcinoma.

## SAFETY RELATED CHANGES

Idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura, lymphadenopathy and acute disseminated encephalomyelitis have been spontaneously reported during post-approval use of Gardasil (**quadrivalent human papilloma virus (types 6, 11, 16, 18) recombinant vaccine**).

RotaTeq (**rotavirus vaccine, live, oral, pentavalent, MSD**) is now contraindicated in individuals with severe combined immunodeficiency disease (SCID).

Tolvon (**mianserin hydrochloride BP**) is now contraindicated with the concomitant use of monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitors.

## NEW FORMULATIONS

**Ziprasidone mesilate** is now available as an intramuscular injection (Zeldox IM). Zeldox IM is indicated for the acute treatment and short term management of agitation and disturbed behaviour in patients with schizophrenia and related psychoses when oral therapy is not appropriate. It is contraindicated in recent acute myocardial infarction; uncompensated heart failure; conditions with a potential to increase QT interval: QT interval prolongation or history of QT prolongation, congenital long QT syndrome, and use with other drugs known to increase the QT interval. The recommended dose is 10- 20mg administered as required up to a maximum dose of 40 mg/day. Zeldox IM is available as a powder for injection in a single dose vial as ziprasidone mesilate equivalent to 30 mg ziprasidone (20 mg/mL ziprasidone when reconstituted). An ampoule containing 1.2 mL of Sterile Water for Injections Ph. Eur. is also supplied for reconstitution purposes.

Norvir (**ritonavir**) is now available as Norvir 100 mg film coated tablets. The recommended dose of Norvir tablets is 600 mg (6 tablets) twice daily.

*This list is a summary of only some of the changes that have occurred over the last month. Before prescribing always refer to the full Product Information*