

May **MIMS** Monthly Medicine Update

NEW INDICATIONS

Micardis (**telmisartan**) is now indicated in the prevention of cardiovascular morbidity and mortality in patients 55 years or older with coronary artery disease, peripheral artery disease, previous stroke, transient ischaemic attack or high risk diabetes with evidence of end organ damage. The recommended dose is 80 mg once daily.

Erbix 5mg/ml (**cetuximab**) is now indicated in the treatment of patients with epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR) expressing, K-RAS wild type metastatic colorectal cancer in combination with chemotherapy and as a single agent in those who have failed or are intolerant to oxaliplatin based therapy. Erbix is also now indicated for the treatment of squamous cell cancer of the head and neck in combination with platinum based chemotherapy for recurrent and/or metastatic disease.

Seroquel (**quetiapine fumarate**) is now indicated as monotherapy in the treatment of children and adolescents aged 10 to 17 years with acute mania associated with bipolar I disorder and in the treatment of schizophrenia in adolescents aged 13 to 17 years. In acute mania monotherapy, the total daily dose for the first five days of therapy is 50 mg (Day 1), 100 mg (Day 2), 200 mg (Day 3), 300 mg (Day 4) and 400 mg (Day 5). After Day 5, the dose should be adjusted within the effective dose range of 400 to 600 mg/day depending upon the clinical response and tolerability of the patient. In the treatment of schizophrenia in adolescents aged 13 to 17 years, the total daily dose for the first five days of therapy is 50 mg (Day 1), 100 mg (Day 2), 200 mg (Day 3), 300 mg (Day 4) and 400 mg (Day 5). After Day 5, the dose should be adjusted within the effective dose range of 400 to 800 mg/day depending upon the clinical response and tolerability of the patient.

Seroquel XR (**quetiapine fumarate**) is now indicated in the treatment of generalised anxiety disorder in adults. Initial dosing should begin at 50 mg on Day 1 and 2, increased to 150 mg on Day 3 and 4. Efficacy was demonstrated with Seroquel XR at doses ranging from 50 to 300 mg/day, however no additional benefit was seen in the 300 mg group compared to the 150 mg group. Doses above 150 mg/day are not recommended.

NEW FORMULATIONS

Rebif (**interferon beta-1a (rch)**) is now available in cartridges for the treatment of ambulatory patients with multiple sclerosis who have experienced two or more relapses within the last 2 years. The cartridges are for multidose use in one patient only. Rebif cartridges must be administered with RebiSmart, a re-usable autoinjector device. Cartridges should be discarded within 21 days after first use.

Rebif cartridges are available as a PBS Authority item containing 132 microgram/1.5 ml in packs of 4.

Stalevo (**levodopa/carbidopa/entacapone**) is now available in two new strengths as 75/18.75/200 mg and 125/31.25/200 mg tablets for the management of patients with Parkinson's disease who are experiencing motor fluctuations. They are available as a PBS Streamlined Authority item [3305 Parkinson disease in patients being treated with levodopa-decarboxylase inhibitor combinations who are experiencing fluctuations in motor function due to end-of-dose effect; 3306 Parkinson disease in patients stabilised on concomitant treatment with levodopa-decarboxylase inhibitor combinations and entacapone] in packs of 200 tablets.

SAFETY RELATED CHANGES

When **cetuximab** (Erbix 5 mg/mL) is used in combination with radiotherapy or chemotherapy (including infusional fluorouracil, capecitabine or platinum compounds), patients may experience an increased incidence of specific adverse reactions. Refer to full product information for specific details. Decreased haemoglobin to 8.07 mmol/L males, 7.45 mmol/L females on at least one occasion occurred in 11% of **quetiapine** (Seroquel XR) patients in all trials including open label extensions. In short-term placebo controlled trials, decreased haemoglobin to 8.07 mmol/L males, 7.45 mmol/L females on at least one occasion in 8.3% of quetiapine patients compared to 6.2% of placebo patients was observed.

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.