PRODUCT UPDATE

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NEW PRODUCTS

Molecular Test Has Been Approved for Node-Positive Cancer

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of GeneSearch™ Breast Lymph Node (BLN) Assay (Veridex) marks the first molecularly based technology to determine whether the disease is node-positive while the patient is still in the operating room.

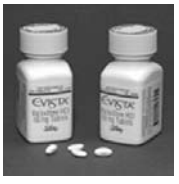
The sentinel node commonly is removed for examination during lumpectomy or mastectomy. In some cases, the node is immediately examined and additional nodes are removed if cancer cells are found. That initial examination is followed by more complete pathology that typically takes one to two days.

For some women, cancer cells are not discovered until the later examination and additional surgery may be needed.

In a clinical trial, the GeneSearch BLN Assay showed strong agreement with results from extensive pathology of the nodes of 416 patients. The test accurately predicted almost 88% of the time that breast cancer had spread in women with metastasis. Patients without metastasis were identified accurately 94% of the time. For more information on the GeneSearch BLN Assay, visit www.veridex.com.

PHARMACY CORNER

Tablets Curb Breast Cancer Risk



The (FDA) approved raloxifene hydrochloride tablets (Evista®, Eli Lilly and Company) to reduce the risk of invasive breast cancer in postmenopausal women with osteoporosis and in postmenopausal women at high risk for invasive breast cancer. Evista, an oral tablet, is a selective estrogen receptor modulator and should not be used by women with a high risk for blood clots. For more information on Evista, visit www.evista.com.

New Dosage Is Available

Sanofi-aventis U.S. launched a new 200 mg single-use vial of its chemotherapy treatment Eloxatin® (oxaliplatin injection) for patients who have adjuvant stage III colon cancer and advanced colorectal cancer. The single-use vial offers convenience, efficiency, and safety during preparation. Eloxatin previously had been available in 50 mg and 100 mg single-use vials. The 200 mg vial is available for order by cancer treatment clinics and hospitals nationwide. For more information, visit www.eloxatin.com.

Drug Targets Breast Cancer

The FDA has approved ixabepilone for injection Ixempra™ (Bristol-Myers Squibb) for the following two indications

- In combination with capecitabine for treatment of patients with metastatic or locally advanced breast cancer resistant to treatment with an anthracycline and a taxane
- Patients with cancer that are taxane resistant and for whom further anthracycline therapy is contraindicated.

Ixempra also is indicated as monotherapy for the treatment of metastatic or locally advanced breast cancer in patients whose tumors are resistant or refractory to anthracyclines, taxanes, and capecitabine.

Ixempra is a microtubule inhibitor in the epothilone class of antineoplastic agents. Dose reduction is required in patients with elevated aspartate aminotransferase, alanine aminotransferase, or bilirubin levels. Peripheral neuropathy, myelosuppression, and nausea and vomiting are the most common side effects seen after IV Ixempra use. For more information on this drug and to read the full prescribing information, visit www.ixempra.com.

New Drug Fights Alzheimer Disease

The FDA has approved a rivastigmine transdermal patch for mild to moderate Alzheimer disease. The Exelon Patch® (Novartis) is the first transdermal system approved to treat Alzheimer disease. The patch also has been approved for mild to moderate Parkinson disease dementia. Rivastigmine oral formulations already were approved for the Alzheimer indication. In adults, the patch has an initial dose of 4.6 mg, with a gradual increase to a 9.5 mg patch applied daily.

Transdermal patches should be applied immediately after being removed from their outer packaging and should never be cut into smaller pieces. The Exelon Patch should be removed after 24 hours and a new patch should be applied. Application sites should be rotated. Make sure all transdermal patches and medications are disposed of properly and out of reach of children and pets. The most common side effects reported in a trial of Exelon Patch were gastrointestinal symptoms, such as nausea and vomiting, that are typical of all cholinesterase inhibitors. For more information on the Exelon patch, visit www.exelon.com.

Generic Toporol® Is Now Available

KV Pharmaceutical has begun shipment of its 100 mg and 200 mg strengths of metoprolol succinate extended-release tablets, a generic form of Toporol® XL (AstraZeneca). A generic drug is manufactured and distributed without patent protection and must contain the same active ingredients as the original formulation. In most cases, a generic drug is considered bioequivalent to the brand name with respect to pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamic properties. Generic products are not available until the patent protections afforded to the original developer expire. When generic products become available, the market competition often leads to substantially lower prices for both the brand name and generic. Generic drugs' appearance on the market varies. Drug patents give 20 years of protection, but the applications are submitted prior to clinical trials, so the effective life of a patent tends to be 7–12 years. For more information, visit www.kvpharma.com.

NEW SOFTWARE

Healthcare Program Is Unveiled

SmartDraw.com has launched a software tool to help healthcare professionals create patient handouts, anatomic diagrams, healthcare facility floor plans, case management time lines, schedules, flowcharts, and organizational charts.

The SmartDraw Healthcare Edition 2008 is graphics software for use by hospitals, physicians, nurses, healthcare educators, students, and healthcare administrators. SmartDraw contains thousands of healthcare images and graphics, including more than 3,000 medical images. SmartDraw allows the user to create diagrams, graphics, and charts. For more information on SmartDraw, visit www.smartdraw.com.

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