

Reflections on some problems in E.N.T.



Winter has arrived and with it has come the usual deluge of respiratory infections, aural complaints and influenza. The intensity of winter ailments in South Africa is such that more than R5m is spent every year at retail level combating them. This winter looks set to be more severe than usual, so Family Practice reviews below some of the products available for the prophylaxis and treatment of these troublesome and socially disrupting conditions which cost the country so many lost man-hours each year.

Ilvico

Produced by Merck Pharmaceuticals, Ilvico is available in tablet or syrup form. It is indicated for the prevention and treatment of colds, influenza and infections of the upper respiratory tract, nasal catarrh, etc.

The active anti-histamine, Ilvin, which Ilvico contains, reduces swelling and excess secretion of the mucous membranes.

Persons with glaucoma or prostatic hypertrophy should not use this preparation because of the possible anti-cholinergic action, which can vary considerably.

Mental alertness can be reduced by this medicine, so persons undergoing treatment should not control vehicles or machinery. Simultaneous intake of alcohol can lead to drowsiness.

For further information circle No 206

Iliadin

Also produced by Merck Pharmaceuticals is Iliadin, a topical vasoconstrictor which effects rapid and marked decongestion of inflamed-oedematous and allergically hyperaemic mucosa in the nasopharynx, and around the eyes, without effect on either the cardiovascular or central nervous system.

Iliadin 0.05% is available as drops or spray, while Iliadin 0.025% is only available as drops.

It has a rapid therapeutic effect, being noticed within a few minutes of application, and then lasts for 6 - 8 hours.

Iliadin is indicated for the relief of nasal congestion in a wide variety of allergic and infectious disorders.

For further information circle No 207

Influenza Vaccine

Available from Intal Ethical promotions, the vaccine contains strains of virus of groups A and B corresponding to the current epidemiological situation, according to the recommendations of the WHO.

It is indicated for active immunization against influenza, caused by the virus types mentioned on the packaging.

Vaccination should not be performed during acute feverish illnesses. Children

prone to fits or convulsions should only be vaccinated under medical supervision.

Also, people who are sensitised to the white of egg should not be vaccinated.

Protection starts about 8 - 10 days after administration reaching a peak after 2 - 4 weeks and declines gradually over a period of twelve months.

For further information circle No 208

Cepacaine

Produced by Mer National, Cepacaine is available as either lozenges or solution, and is indicated for rapid and temporary relief of pain and discomfort in sore throats due to colds, influenza, dust allergy, smoke or excessive use of voice.

It contains Benzocaine and is therefore contra-indicated in persons with a history of hypersensitivity to local anaesthetics.

Persons with a high fever, severe sore throat or persistent cough should not use this preparation unless directed by a physician. Cepacaine solution should be used with caution in patients with severely traumatised mucosa and sepsis in the region of proposed application.

For further information circle No 209

Bactrim

Produced by Roche Products, Bactrim is an anti-microbial agent indicated in infections due to sensitive strains of organisms such as acute and chronic bronchitis, bronchiectasis, pneumonia, pharyngitis, tonsillitis, sinusitis, and otitis media.

Of course it is also indicated in many other types of infection such as urinary and GI tract infections, but for the purpose of this article, I have concentrated on the respiratory tract infections.

Bactrim is contra-indicated in patients showing marked liver parenchymal damage, blood dyscrasias or severe renal insufficiency where repeated measurements of the plasma concentration cannot be performed. It should not be administered to patients with a history of hypersensitivity to sulfonamides, nor to

those with porphyria.

For the time being, Bactrim is contra-indicated during pregnancy.

At the recommended dosage, Bactrim is well tolerated, but nausea, vomiting and skin rashes may occur. Haematological changes have been observed in some patients, particularly in the elderly. The majority of these were mild asymptomatic and proved reversible on withdrawal of the drug.

Regular blood counts are recommended whenever Bactrim is given for long periods.

For further information circle No 210

Purmycin

Manufactured by Lennon Limited, Purmycin is the broad spectrum antibiotic, Erythromycin, and is indicated for use in patients unable to take penicillin because of previous reactions. Pharyngitis and Mycoplasma pneumoniae pneumonia are just two of the infections that Purmycin is useful for.

It is contra-indicated in patients suffering from impaired liver function or in patients

who have developed jaundice or other symptoms of liver toxicity during previous treatment, and in those with a known hypersensitivity to Erythromycin.

Side-effects are usually rare and mild. Large doses occasionally produce nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. The most striking allergic reaction to this drug is cholestatic hepatitis, which is characterised by nausea vomiting and abdominal cramps, often mimicking the pain of acute cholecystitis.

For further information circle No 211

Purbac

Also produced by Lennon Limited is Purbac, (Co-trimoxazole) which is indicated against a wide range of Gram-positive and Gram-negative organisms, including those which cause upper and lower respiratory tract infections such as acute and chronic bronchitis, bronchiectasis, pneumonia, tonsillitis, sinusitis and pharyngitis.

As before, Co-trimoxazole is contra-indicated in patients suffering from porphyria, liver parenchymal damage, severe renal insufficiency, and a history of

hypersensitivity to sulphonamides.

At the recommended dosage levels, Co-trimoxazole is well tolerated.

For further information circle No 212

Auralgin

Fisons Pharmaceuticals produce Auralgin which is indicated for the early treatment of acute and sub-acute otitis media.

Auralgin should not be used in chronic suppurative otitis media.

No serious side-effects have been reported with the use of this preparation.

For further information circle No 213

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