



Caring Ambassadors Hepatitis C Program Newsletter

March 2008

IN THE NEWS

HIV, hepatitis scare may affect 40,000 US clinic patients

<http://www.citizen.co.za/index/article.aspx?pDesc=1,1,22&type=top&File=080228190225.22rsu9xa.xml>

“US officials Thursday said 40,000 people may have been infected with HIV and hepatitis in a major health scare after a Las Vegas clinic was found to have re-used syringes and medicine vials. Authorities in southern Nevada said they were notifying some 40,000 patients who received anesthesia injections at the clinic's endoscopy center between March 2004 and January 11, 2008 about potential exposure to hepatitis and HIV.”

Clean needle program gets thumbs-up

http://www.record-bee.com/local/ci_8373345

“LAKEPORT, CA-- A legal needle exchange program is closer to becoming a reality after the Lake County Board of Supervisors authorized such a program Tuesday. The vote was unanimous, with supervisor Anthony Farrington absent. The board adopted a resolution that authorizes a clean needle and syringe exchange program under Assembly Bill 547, signed into law Jan. 1, 2006. “

Grapefruit compound may help combat hepatitis C infection

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/02/080204124110.htm>

“ScienceDaily (Feb. 4, 2008) — A compound that naturally occurs in grapefruit and other citrus fruits may be able to block the secretion of hepatitis C virus (HCV) from infected cells, a process required to maintain chronic infection. A team of researchers from the Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Engineering in Medicine (MGH-CEM) report that HCV is bound to very low-density lipoprotein (vLDL, a so-called "bad" cholesterol) when it is secreted from liver cells and that the viral secretion required to pass infection to other cells may be blocked by the common flavonoid naringenin.”

More support for multi-dose syringe ban

<http://www.newsinferno.com/archives/2520>

“A multi-dose syringe ban appears to be gaining momentum in New York State. Many feel that medical malpractice involving the irresponsible use of multi-dose syringes by Dix Hills doctor Harvey Finkelstein and Manhasset obstetrician-gynecologist E. Jacob Simhae are cause to ban the use of multi-dose vials and hope the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will take this next step. State Health Commissioner Richard Daines is part of this growing group.”

Migenix amends protocol in hepatitis C study

<http://fdanews.com/newsletter/article?issueId=11280&articleId=103735>

“Migenix will add a 600-mg celgosivir combination therapy arm to its Phase II study in treatment-naive hepatitis C patients. The 12-week, randomized, active-controlled study initially enrolled 20 patients in two treatment arms: peginterferon alfa-2b plus ribavirin and the combination plus 400-mg celgosivir. The approved protocol amendment allows for the addition of the 600-mg arm and the flexibility to increase the number of patients in the study to a maximum of 50, Migenix said.”

Sustained response to hepatitis C treatment lowers liver complications and death in HIV/HCV coinfecting people

<http://www.aidsmap.com/en/news/F35C5DEA-E996-40C3-B173-C5E0B2714546.asp>

“HIV/HCV coinfecting people who achieve sustained response to hepatitis C treatment have a decreased long-term risk of liver-related complications and death, researchers reported Monday at the Fifteenth Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections in Boston.”

Intercell's therapeutic hepatitis C vaccine meets primary endpoints in Phase II

http://www.visavis.de/modules.php?name=djnews&djn_id=48051

“February 6, 2008. Today, Intercell AG announced the analysis of Phase II data for its peptide-based therapeutic Hepatitis C vaccine (IC41) in an exploratory clinical study targeting treatment-naïve Hepatitis C patients. The vaccine comprises five synthetic T-cell peptides and Intercell's first-generation poly-arginine adjuvant (IC30). It is designed to stimulate T-cell responses against viral protein structures conserved throughout the major HCV genotypes, in order to reduce viral load in the blood of chronically infected patients.”

New bid for hepatitis C vaccine

<http://news.theage.com.au/new-bid-for-hepatitis-c-vaccine/20080207-1qs7.html>

“Adelaide scientists will lead a \$2 million research project to develop new vaccines to treat hepatitis C. The program hopes to identify antiviral proteins that can be used to fight the disease. With more than 170 million people around the world infected with hepatitis C, University of Adelaide virologist Michael Beard said an effective vaccine was one of the world's global health priorities.”

OctoPlus to begin Phase IIa study of hepatitis C drug Locteron in US

<http://www.forbes.com/markets/feeds/afx/2008/02/07/afx4626280.html>

“AMSTERDAM - Octoplus said it is to begin Phase IIa studies of its Locteron drug, used to treat chronic hepatitis C, in the US. The Dutch biotech company said the study will expand on the 'favorable results' of its recently completed Phase IIa study in Europe. The study will evaluate up to 56 patients with chronic hepatitis C, and look at safety, tolerability, pharmacokinetics and viral kinetics issues, the company said.”

Schering-Plough, OraSure Tech collaborate on oral hepatitis C test outside U.S.

<http://www.forbes.com/markets/feeds/afx/2008/02/11/afx4639423.html>

“Schering-Plough Corp. and OraSure Technologies Inc. Monday agreed to collaborate on the development and promotion of an oral hepatitis C virus (HCV) test outside the U.S. The test will use OraSure's OraQuick technology platform. Under the agreement Schering-Plough will reimburse OraSure for certain development costs and will provide payments to OraSure based on the achievement of certain regulatory and commercial milestones in international markets. Schering-Plough will provide promotional support while OraSure will make all sales and retain the rights to market and sell the test in all markets throughout the world.”

SciClone says hepatitis C drug trial's interim data promising

<http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssHealthcareNews/idUSWNAS027620080211>

“SciClone Pharmaceuticals Inc and Sigma-Tau said interim data from a late-stage trial of hepatitis C drug candidate, Zadaxin, was promising, with 171 out of 553 total patients responding to treatment at the end of 48 weeks of therapy. Full data from the trial will be available in the third quarter of 2008, the companies said in a joint statement.”

Presidio Pharmaceuticals and Numerate announce research collaboration to identify improved hepatitis C therapeutics

http://www.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20080211005395&newsLang=en

“Presidio Pharmaceuticals, Inc., a specialty pharmaceutical company focused on developing and commercializing novel, small molecule compounds for the treatment of HIV-1 and HCV, and Numerate, Inc., a biotechnology company with a proprietary drug engineering platform, announced today that they have entered into a research collaboration to discover and develop novel small molecule inhibitors of hepatitis C virus (HCV). Terms of the collaboration and the specific HCV target were not disclosed.”

Husband blast on Anita's bug [United Kingdom]

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/woman/health/article799141.ece>

“Dame Anita Roddick’s widower has marked the anniversary of her bombshell announcement that she had hepatitis C – by slamming government inaction over the killer virus. Gordon, 65, said: “Letting people die because you can’t be bothered to put proper services in place is totally unacceptable.” It is thought 500,000 Brits carry hepatitis C but don’t realise. And the longer it goes undetected, the greater the risk of fatal liver damage or cancer.”

1,000 people living with killer disease [United Kingdom]

http://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/display.var.2053389.0.1_000_people_living_with_killer_disease.php

“MORE than 1,000 people could be living with a killer disease in Bolton but have no idea they are ill, according to experts. Leading gastroenterologist at the Royal Bolton Hospital, Dr George Lipscombe, spoke out during an exhibition being held at Victoria Square in Bolton town centre today to raise awareness of hepatitis C.”

Amarillo Bioscience partner, CytoPharm, to conduct 144 patient phase 2 hepatitis C trial in Taiwan

<http://money.cnn.com/news/newsfeeds/articles/marketwire/0362546.htm>

“Amarillo Biosciences, Inc. today announced that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has allowed the Investigational New Drug (IND) application submitted by the company to test its low dose oral interferon in a Phase 2 hepatitis C clinical trial to go into effect. Accordingly, CytoPharm Inc., the company's partner in Taiwan, will fund and conduct a clinical trial of 144 chronic hepatitis C patients in Taiwan. The patients will receive one of two different dosages of oral human interferon alpha or placebo.”

Travel risk of hepatitis ignored [United Kingdom]

<http://www.nursinginpractice.com/default.asp?title=TravelriskoffHepatitisignored&page=article.display&article.id=8550>

“British overseas travelers should take care when travelling to South Asian countries to protect themselves from infectious diseases, a UK charity warns. A team of senior doctors state there is a growing problem with widespread ignorance among overseas travelers of the need to take health and safety precautions.”

Lack of inmate treatment costs state \$8M in lawsuit; four prisoners each receive \$2M

<http://www.jg-tc.com/articles/2008/02/21/news/doc47be462b31a9e880657320.txt>

“MATTOON, IL — A federal jury in Urbana this week awarded \$8 million to four state prisoners who claimed they were not treated for hepatitis C under Department of Corrections policies, a Mattoon attorney said Thursday. H. Kent Heller of Mattoon said he filed the case on behalf of Coles County resident Ed Roe and three other inmates housed at Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln in 2005 after confirming state policy prevented treatment of the disease for prisoners with less than 18 months remaining on their sentences. Treatment for hepatitis C can extend several months or two years.”

Old, dirty jail razors raise fears of hep C; used blades erroneously given back to inmates to shave with [Canada]

<http://thechronicleherald.ca/Front/1040146.html>

“An estimated 36 inmates used dirty razors that were mistakenly distributed at a provincial jail late last year. Now, they’re receiving vaccinations [for hepatitis B] after being tested last month for various strains of hepatitis. “Right now, we’ve been given a nine-month sentence to see if we’ve been given a life sentence,” said one inmate, who asked not to be identified.”

CLINICAL TRIALS, COHORT STUDIES, PILOT STUDIES

Inferior response of Asian vs. non-Asian hepatitis C genotype 3 infection to combination antiviral therapy. Freshwater DA, et al. J Viral Hepat. 2008 Feb;15(2):115-9.

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Clinical and laboratory characteristics of acute hepatitis C in patients with end-stage renal disease on hemodialysis. Lemos LB, et al. J Clin Gastroenterol. 2008 Feb;42(2):208-11.
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BASIC AND APPLIED SCIENCE, PRE-CLINICAL STUDIES

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HIV/HCV COINFECTION

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COMPLEMENTARY & ALTERNATIVE THERAPY

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