



هيئة الدواء المصرية

الإدارة المركزية للرعاية الصيدلانية
الإدارة العامة للممارسات الدوائية و الصيدلانية

Pharmacy Practice Newsletter

“Know what’s new... Optimize care”

Introduction

The Central Administration of Pharmaceutical Care in the Egyptian Drug Authority is keenly interested in upgrading the pharmaceutical services provided to the patient and boosting the pharmacotherapy-related knowledge of all healthcare providers, which will positively impact the patient’s health and safety.

From this point, the General Administration of Drug Utilization and Pharmacy Practice (DU&PP) is pleased to publish the Pharmacy Practice Newsletters, which aim to aid practitioners in their mission to optimize care. Topics related to pharmacotherapy and pharmacy practice will be addressed within our newsletter issues. The newsletter will provide an up-to-date, concise summary that fits perfectly into the healthcare provider’s tight schedule.

We utilize accredited resources and indexed journals integrating the best available research into clinical care, to support the decision-making process for healthcare professionals. To optimize patients’ treatment plans and ensure their safety and efficacy, clinicians must closely follow the literature for any updates related to their practice, given the dynamic nature of the clinical research.

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EDA Publications: National Guidance for Rational Antifungal Use (2024)

The National Rational Antimicrobial Use Team within the Drug Utilization and Pharmacy Practice Administration has issued the “*National Guidance for Antifungal Use*”. The guide comes as a part of the EDA’s relentless efforts to rationalize antimicrobial use in collaboration with several stakeholders represented in the National Rational Antimicrobial Use Committee, which has rigorously reviewed this guide.

Aim of the guide:

- Promote judicious and optimal use of antifungal agents.
- Provide the rationale for selecting antifungal agents, and emphasize risk assessment and management.

Introduction:

Fungi are unicellular or multi-cellular eukaryotic organisms that exist in all environments worldwide. While most fungi do not play a significant role in human disease, there are several hundred fungi that do, resulting in fungal infection or disease. Fungal infections (mycoses) range from common benign infections like 'jock itch' to serious, life-threatening infections such as cryptococcal meningitis. Clinically, fungal infections are best categorized first according to the site and extent of the infection, then the route of acquisition, and finally, the virulence of the causative organism. These classifications are essential when determining the most effective treatment regimen for a particular mycosis.

Content of the guide:

- The guide consists of three parts each addressing one of the commonly encountered fungal infections in the clinical practice including *Aspergillosis*, *Candidiasis*, and *Mucormycosis*.

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Where to find the guide:



The “*National Guidance for Antifungal Use*” is published on the EDA official website and can be accessed via this [LINK](#) or by scanning the QR Code.

Community Pharmacy Tips: OTC Medications

Introduction:

- Community pharmacists play a pivotal role in dispensing over-the-counter (OTC) medications.
- The relative ease of access to OTC medications as well as its low cost makes them prone to misuse by the patients. Several issues may arise as a result of using OTC without consulting their pharmacist about the proper use of their medications such as: increased adverse drug reactions and presence of drug-drug interactions. Therefore, it is the pharmacist’s responsibility to educate patients and advocate for the rational use of OTC medications.
- **Within this issue, we discuss the available recommendations for certain medication classes that has some approved OTC agents. A full list of the approved OTC medications can be found [here](#).**

Drug	Available Recommendations
<p>Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs)*</p>	<p>OTC agents of this class are indicated only for short-term treatment of reflux symptoms (e.g. heartburn, acid regurgitation) in adults (not to exceed 2 weeks). If there are no symptoms relief after 2 weeks of continuous treatment, the patient is instructed to consult a doctor.</p> <p>Patients should be instructed not to exceed the recommended dose or duration for the indication approved as OTC and warned on the following that occur in cases of long duration of use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bone Fracture: Several observational studies suggest that PPIs may be associated with an increased risk for osteoporosis-related fractures of the hip, wrist, or spine. The fracture risk was increased in patients receiving high-dose, defined as multiple daily doses, and long-term PPI therapy (a year or longer). Patients should use the lowest dose and shortest duration of PPIs appropriate to the condition being treated. ▪ Subacute cutaneous lupus erythematosus (SCLE): PPIs are associated with very infrequent cases of SCLE. If lesions occur, especially in sun-exposed areas of the skin, and if accompanied by arthralgia, the patient should seek medical help promptly and drug should be stopped. SCLE after previous treatment with a PPI may increase the risk of SCLE with other PPIs. ▪ Hypomagnesaemia: Severe hypomagnesaemia has been rarely reported in patients treated with PPIs for at least three months, and in most cases for a year. Serious manifestations of hypomagnesaemia such as fatigue, tetany, delirium, convulsions, dizziness, and ventricular arrhythmia can occur but they may begin insidiously and be overlooked. Hypomagnesaemia may lead to hypocalcaemia and/or hypokalemia. In most affected patients, hypomagnesaemia (and hypomagnesaemia associated hypocalcaemia and/or hypokalemia) improved after magnesium replacement and discontinuation of the PPI. <p>Patients should be instructed to consult a doctor if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ They have unintentional weight loss, anemia, gastrointestinal bleeding, dysphagia, persistent vomiting or vomiting with blood, since PPIs may alleviate symptoms and delay diagnosis of a severe condition. In these cases, malignancy should be excluded. ▪ They have had previous gastric ulcer or gastrointestinal surgery. ▪ They have jaundice, hepatic impairment, or liver disease. ▪ They have any other serious disease affecting general well-being. ▪ They are aged over 55 years with new or recently changed symptoms.

Community Pharmacy Tips: OTC Medications (Cont.)

Drug	Available Recommendations
<p>Intranasal Corticosteroids *</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Systemic effects of nasal corticosteroids may occur, particularly at high doses prescribed for prolonged periods. Treatment with higher than recommended doses may result in clinically significant adrenal suppression. ▪ Avoid using higher than recommended dosages in pediatrics; suppression of linear growth (i.e., reduction of growth velocity), reduced bone mineral density, or hypercortisolism (Cushing syndrome) may occur; titrate to lowest effective dose. ▪ Reduction in growth velocity may occur when corticosteroids are administered to pediatric patients, even at recommended doses via the intranasal route. ▪ Avoid use in patients with recent nasal septal ulcers, nasal surgery, or nasal trauma until healing has occurred. ▪ Prolonged use of corticosteroids may increase the incidence of secondary infection, mask acute infection (including fungal infections), prolong or exacerbate viral infections, or limit response to vaccines. ▪ Use with caution in patients with cataracts and/or glaucoma; increased intraocular pressure, open-angle glaucoma, and cataracts have occurred with prolonged use. ▪ The medication needs priming and each manufacturer’s instructions for use should be followed.

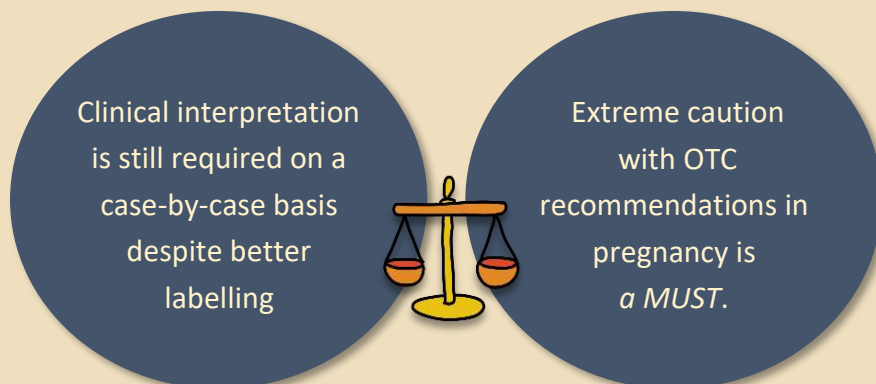
*Only certain agents from this class are approved as OTC, refer to the OTC list to check the approved agents.

Use of OTC Medications During Pregnancy:



Despite the OTC status of some medications, pregnant women should still be directed to consult their treating physician regarding their medications.

- OTC medications are a common concern among pregnant women; therefore, pharmacists need to recognize their role in patient counseling. However, consulting the treating physician is still essential.
- Although the labeling system allows better patient-specific counseling and informed decision-making, *it still does not provide a definitive “yes” or “no” answer in most cases.*
- Since the safety and efficacy profile of a given medicine often changes during a normal pregnancy, physicians *are often cautious to avoid causing harm to the developing fetus.*



DU&PP News: Three Pharmaceutical Care Initiatives (May and June Digest)

The Egyptian Drug Authority launched the activities of three Pharmaceutical Care Initiatives in Pharmacy Practice through May and June 2024 under supervision and by the team of the Drug Utilization and Pharmacy Practice Administration, as follow;

1- Experience Exchange Hub at EDA under the title (Triple Es Hub)

The goal of Triple Es Hub is to consolidate efforts made at the national level to achieve a comprehensive approach to disseminating and circulating the best pharmaceutical practices in health institutions in the Arab Republic of Egypt based on the EDA vision and Egypt Vision 2030, to build and revitalize the partnerships for sustainable development.

The Triple Es Hub strategy adopts the necessity of experience exchange in Pharmaceutical Practice, through health institutions' participation from different affiliations and governorates (governmental and private sectors) who attend regular scientific meetings and present relevant educational case presentations with clinical interventions that are recommended by a clinical pharmacist in the scope of communicable and non-communicable diseases. In addition to two ways to discuss among pharmacists, also with academic staff and experts in pharmacy from leading health institutions in Egypt.

The 4th scientific meeting was held in May 2024 for hospital pharmacists and clinical pharmacists about diabetes management (adult and pediatric) through providing educational case presentations. This comes within the efforts made by the EDA to improve and sustain pharmaceutical practices and services provided, in addition to the optimal and rational use of medications.



DU&PP News: Three Pharmaceutical Care Initiatives (Cont.)

2- (Safe Medication....Safe Life) Initiative:

The initiative's goal is spreading awareness among various members of society regarding the safe and effective use of medications in line with the Society Engagement Approach and Egypt Vision 2030, to build healthy and aware communities and to obtain the maximum therapeutic benefits, through discussing the use of medications in multiple topics related to non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes and hypertension diseases, chest disease and use of inhalers, and use of analgesics, in addition to the awareness of cancer medications side effects.

The on-site awareness campaigns are scheduled to target visiting public places, such as cultural centers and palaces, public libraries, outpatient clinics in hospitals, community service centers in universities, or any other public places in the Egyptian governorates.

Community awareness sessions witnessed fruitful discussions among society members, which were held at many places, including Heliopolis, Kerdasa Culture Palaces and Al-Bahr Al-Azzam, Dokki, and Saqqara Public Libraries, for visitors of society members including women, men, and children. This comes within the efforts made by the EDA to improve and sustain drug awareness and pharmaceutical services provided throughout Egypt and its constant keenness to promote the optimal and rational use of medications.



DU&PP News: Three Pharmaceutical Care Initiatives (Cont.)

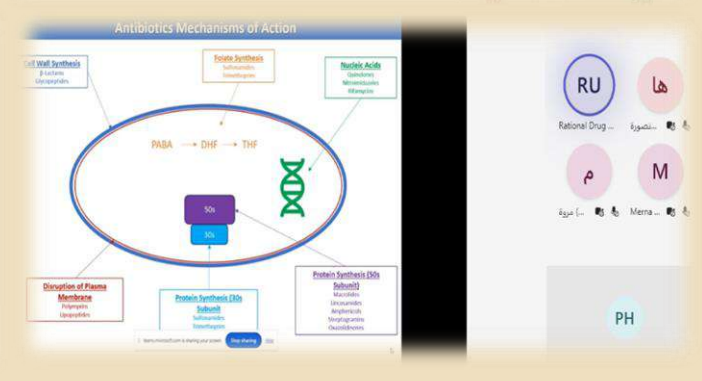
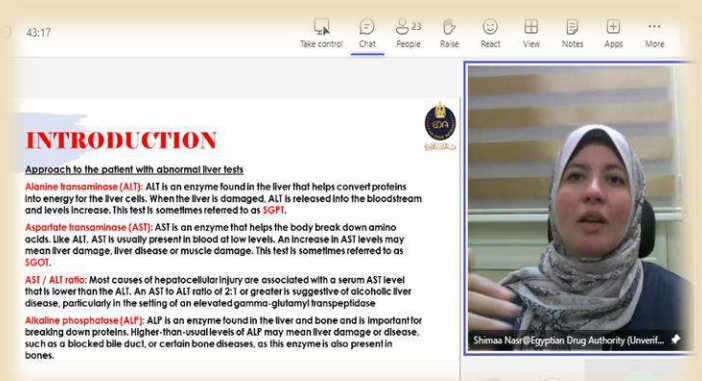
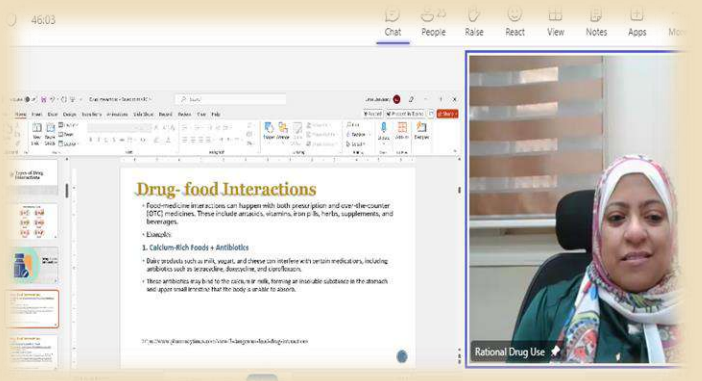
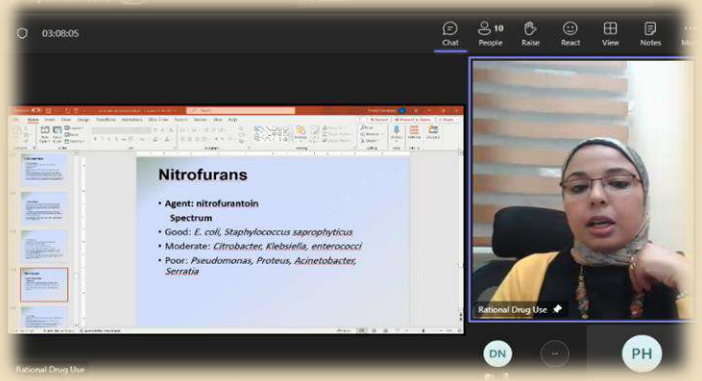
3- (Unlock the Pharmacist Potential) Initiative:

The initiative aims to encourage and sustain the right and optimal pharmaceutical practices and achieve continuing professional development and support. It is launched based on the EDA's vision and its role in Capacity Building and Continuing Development Strategy in line with Egypt Vision 2030.

The initiative scope is the community pharmacists who are the first line confronting society and can make a positive impact.

The training programs are in the form of a series of virtual lectures (online webinars) provided by the General Administration of Drug Utilization and Pharmacy Practices team every month, in addition to the participation of professional experts or academic professors in different practice fields. Such as patient education and counseling, medications used for non-communicable chronic chest diseases, CVS, DM, and liver diseases during Ramadan, and management of drug use and interactions. In addition to the use of antimicrobials, and analgesics, how to manage side effects from oncology medicines and other specialties.

Online webinars brought a constructive discussion among registered pharmacists, through lectures for community pharmacists on different topics such as; the rational use of antimicrobials, liver failure management, and how to manage different types of drug interactions.



About DU&PP

The Drug Utilization and Pharmacy and Pharmacy Practice General Administration (DU&PP) is concerned with rationalizing medication use and reducing medication errors. The General Administration is also concerned with developing pharmaceutical practices, enhancing Egyptian pharmacists' skills, issuing pharmacy practice guidance, preparing national drug lists and the Egyptian drug formulary, and providing numerous training programs. It also aims to raise community awareness and promote the safe and effective use of medications by conducting awareness campaigns and pharmaceutical care initiatives among all segments of society to ensure patient safety and achieve optimal drug use.

Our publications, including clinical practice guides, newsletters and the Egyptian National Formulary, are available at the official EDA website and can be accessed via the following hyperlinks or QR codes:

Guides



SCAN ME

Newsletters



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Formulary





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