



May 2008 Newsletter

MEDICATION UPDATE

Antihistamines – Hay fever, Hives, Sunburn and Insect Bites

Hay fever is a common condition affecting around 20% of the population at sometime during their lives. An allergic reaction is triggered by pollen in the air, with symptoms ranging from simple common cold to severe eyes, nose and throat irritation. Individuals with a history of asthma may experience more asthma symptoms at this time of year. Symptoms may be reduced by avoiding woodland and gardens, particularly late in the day when the pollen count is at its highest.

Other conditions experienced in the summer include hives, sunburn and insect bites from which individuals can have a different level of reaction.

If you believe you are suffering from any of these conditions, a visit to the GP or pharmacist will confirm the diagnosis and suitable remedies, such as antihistamines, may be suggested.

It is important that you advise your GP or Pharmacist of your job role, specifically if safety critical, **as some antihistamine medications will require duties to be accompanied.**

Remember to check online at www.chemist-on-call.com or where you are taking more than one medication call our dedicated help line 08456 773001, 24 hours, 365 days a year.

Holiday Season – Travel Vaccinations and Travel Sickness

If you are fortunate enough to have a more tropical or unusual destination for your holiday and require travel vaccinations, make sure you leave at least 3 months before the trip to schedule your treatment.

You may be taking these immunisations for the first time, or in combination with other medication, so it is vital that you check whether it is safe for you to continue working unaccompanied.

Some medications, such as **Malaria tablets, can cause nausea, vomiting and dizziness.** These drugs have to be taken before, during and for several weeks after a trip, so must form part of your medication check.

Where you have taken **travel sickness medication, be warned, these can cause drowsiness,** so ensure you check whether you are safe to work.



Tummy trouble?

The most common cause of tummy trouble while overseas and on return is due to contaminated water, for drinking or washing food and general lack of hand-washing. If you are unfortunate to suffer **avoid taking medication which has a banned substance, such as morphine, as one of its ingredients.** Ask your pharmacist for a safe remedy and if returning to work whilst taking the medication, remember perform a medication check for your records.

HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE

The Railway Group Standard GE/RT8070 states. . .

“Railway Group members shall have a process in place that enables relevant persons to report the use of prescribed and over-the-counter medicines to their supervisor or line manager...shall ensure that a supervisor or line manager receiving such a report from a relevant person is able to refer to advice provided by a competent medical authority to identify the likely effects on the ability of the relevant person to carry out his or her duties.”

As an employer it is your responsibility to ensure that medications can be reported by staff and are duly checked by professionals.

If you would like more information on how to get the most out of your medication checking service, please call or email.

Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act (April 2008)

What does this mean for me? Well, whether you are an employee or an employer it means that where health and safety policies and procedures exist they must be followed. It is not sufficient to say, I have “a medication checking service” if your employees are not using it routinely.

Where an employee's death is due to a failure in health and safety, the Corporate Directors may be held liable.

Don't just tick a box! Make sure a representative number of your employees are routinely checking their medication.

c.kennedyfiler@healthcare-connections.com 08456 773005

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