



FAMILY MEDICINE NEWSLETTER

Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network
Department of Family Medicine

The Avandia Fallout—What's a Doc to Do?

Heidi Mayville BS PharmD, Clinical Pharmacist

JULY 2007



A new meta-analysis suggests a higher risk of heart attacks and cardiovascular deaths in patients taking rosiglitazone (Avandia) compared to other meds or placebo. Experts crunching the same numbers come up with differing conclusions, and point out the study's shortcomings. The June 2007 issue of *Prescriber's Letter* addresses the Nissen meta-analysis in a succinct, but thorough way. The detailed document provides an easy to understand discussion of the study's limitations, including a caution against trying to calculate NNTs and NNHs from meta-analyses. Finally, the document includes a one-page patient handout (*Avandia and Risk of Heart Attack - Information for Patients*). You can get this information at www.prescribersletter.com, or by contacting me for a copy at 610-969-4969 or heidi.mayville@lvh.com.

In the meantime, here are some points to consider:

- Avandia's ONLY proven benefit is glycemic control. Avandia does not provide long-term cardiovascular benefit.
- Both Actos & Avandia can cause edema and shouldn't be used for moderate to severe heart failure patients.

The FDA is trying to obtain the other studies the companies haven't yet produced. Things could change in the future, but right now it's safe to say that metformin should continue to be selected first for most patients, since it may have a beneficial effect on cardiovascular outcomes. Follow that with a sulfonylurea if needed, then consider other agents.

References: Prescriber's Letter; June 2007; Vol: 14

Presentations/Publications/Awards/Other

PRESENTATIONS:

- Susan Mathieu, MD and Jeffrey Mathieu, MD presented "Developing a Portfolio-Based Curriculum to Enhance Self-Directed Competency-Based Residency Learning and Evaluation" at the 40th STFM Annual Spring Conference in Chicago, Illinois, April 2007.
- Jeffrey Sternlieb, PhD presented "Balint Groups: A New Perspective on Difficult Business Relationships" at the Philadelphia Region Organizational Development Network, in Philadelphia PA, March 2007.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:

- Jeffrey Sternlieb, PhD was appointed Chair of the Balint Expansion and Opportunities Committee at the annual meeting of The American Balint Society's Council. This Committee has the responsibility for encouraging and supporting efforts of applying the balint group method to groups outside of Family Medicine residencies as well as with practicing physicians.



Antibiotic Resistance Grows

CDC: Don't Use Fluoroquinolones for Gonococcal Infections

CDC officials recently announced that an entire class of antibiotics -- the fluoroquinolones -- is no longer recommended for treatment of gonococcal infections and associated conditions, such as pelvic inflammatory disease. The CDC announcement means that only one class of antibiotics remains to treat these infections.

According to data published in the April 13 Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, the prevalence of fluoroquinolone-resistant *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, or QRNG, in the United States has risen steadily during the past decade, following years of the CDC recommending oral fluoroquinolones as a first-line treatment for gonorrhea and related infections. Those data were gathered as part of the CDC's Gonococcal Isolate Surveillance Project, or GISP.

Recommended treatment options for infections caused by *N. gonorrhoeae* now are limited to cephalosporins. Within this drug class, the CDC recommends use of ceftriaxone, available only as an injection, as a first-line treatment for all types of gonorrhea -- anal, genital and pharyngeal. The oral cephalosporin recommended for initial treatment, cefixime, has only limited availability in the United States.

Complete updated treatment recommendations, including recommended therapy for patients unable to tolerate cephalosporins, appear on the CDC Web site (<http://www.cdc.gov/STD/treatment/2006/updated-regimens.htm>).

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Meet Our New Residents

Brenna Kershetsky, Residency Program Coordinator



Muriel Brothers, MD

Dr. Brothers was born in Portsmouth, Virginia and raised in Maryland. She graduated from the University of Virginia with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. Muriel earned a Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences and her Doctor of Medicine degree from Saba University School of Medicine, Netherlands-Antilles. Her hobbies include martial arts, Latin dancing, swimming, music, art, dog training, speed reading, and any sport for which she can find spare time.

Dalia Corleone, MD

Born and raised in the city of Baghdad, Iraq, Dr. Corleone graduated from the College of Medicine, University of Baghdad in June 1997. She is married to Marcello Corleone for ten years and they are the proud parents of three boys. Dalia enjoys cooking, sports and reading. Dalia's primary goal is to serve the community and to always dedicate her time and efforts towards a good cause—helping and caring for others.

Anthony D'Ambrosio, MD



Dr. D'Ambrosio grew up in Union City, NJ and attended St. Francis University in Loretto, PA where he was part of the physical therapy program. He was also a scholarship athlete on the university tennis team. He graduated from Saint Francis University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology and Psychology. Anthony then began taking classes at Ross University in Dominica, West Indies and graduated with his Doctor of Medicine degree in 2006. He is engaged and planning a 2008 wedding. His interests include snowboarding, playing tennis and cooking.

Lauren Herchak, DO

Born and raised in Hazelton, PA, Dr. Herchak earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology at Temple University, and then graduated from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine June 2007. After eight years of being away from Northeastern PA, she decided to move closer to home and pursue a residency in Family Medicine here in the Lehigh Valley. Her interests include exercising, cooking, reading, history and spending time with family and friends.



Shahid Noor, MD

Dr. Noor graduated from Ayub Medical College in Abbottabad Pakistan in 1999. He is originally from Pakistan, but most recently lived in New York with his wife and baby daughter before joining our program and moving to the Lehigh Valley.



Sandeep R. Ramanujam, MD

Dr. Ramanujam lived in Hyderabad, India for six years. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Marquette University and his Doctor of Medicine degree from St. George's University. Sandeep's family is from Racine, Wisconsin. His hobbies include tennis and traveling.

Welcome !



DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY MEDICINE

Dates of Interest

July 3, 2007 7:00 am GRAND ROUNDS LVH-CC, ECC#1 with videoconference to
LVH-M, ECC Room B
Speaker: Karthik Sheka, MD
Topic: Atrial Fibrillation

July 17, 2007 7:00 am DEPARTMENT MEETING LVH-CC, ECC#1 with videoconference to
CME Meeting LVH-M, South Wing, 3rd Floor CR
*Topic: Regional Health Information
Organization (RHIO)*

August 7, 2007 7:00 am GRAND ROUNDS LVH-CC, ECC#1 with videoconference to
LVH-M, ECC Room B
Speaker: Helene B. Leonetti, MD
*Topic: Alternative and Complimentary
Medicine*

August 21, 2007 7:00 am DEPARTMENT MEETING LVH-CC, ECC#1 with videoconference to
Business Meeting LVH-M, ECC Room A

September 4, 2007 7:00 am

**GRAND ROUNDS IS CANCELLED
DUE TO THE LABOR DAY HOLIDAY.**

September 18, 2007 7:00 am DEPARTMENT MEETING LVH-CC, ECC#1 with videoconference to
CME Meeting LVH-M, South Wing, ECC Room A

Our 2007 Graduates

Brenna Kershetsky, Residency Program Coordinator



From left to right: Michelle Dilks, Nicole Sully, Fiona Baldwin

Fiona Baldwin, MD

Dr. Baldwin received her medical degree from the University of West Indies, Barbados where she was born and raised. She and her husband Joe have a daughter Janine and are expecting their second daughter in June. After graduation, she will reside in southern New Jersey where she will be joining an outpatient practice. Dr. Baldwin will take her Allopathic Boards in July.

Michelle Dilks, DO

Dr. Dilks received her medical degree from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. She was recently married in October and plans on starting a private practice in the local area. Dr. Dilks passed her Osteopathic Boards this spring.

Nicole Sully, DO

Dr. Sully received her medical degree from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. She, along with her husband Dr. Ernest Sully and son Nicholas reside in Jim Thorpe. She will remain in the area, joining Parkland Family Practice. Dr. Sully passed her Osteopathic Boards this spring.

The Family Medicine Community wishes our graduates and their families the best as they venture down this new and exciting path.

Congratulations!

Spotlight the Doc

Brenna Kershetsky, Residency Program Coordinator

Kathalina Corpus, MD



Since her graduation from the Department of Family Medicine Residency Program last year, Dr. Corpus has been primarily staying home caring for her daughter, Isabella. She recently moved to Hershey, Pennsylvania where she lives with her husband, Josh and her daughter. Josh is finishing his Cardiology fellowship at Hershey. Kay is also still participating in the University of Arizona's Program in Integrative Medicine under Dr. Andrew Weil. She will be graduating in November. She has also been working part-time in Steiner Medical and Therapeutic Center in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, which is an integrative medicine clinic. In May, Kay started as part-time faculty at the Lehigh Valley Family Health Center. In the future, Kay hopes to incorporate much of her training in integrative medicine into her practice.

Military Brings EHR's to Iraq

Christopher J. Boerstler, I.T. Coordinator



The U.S. military is enhancing its electronic health record system and is using the technology to help treat approximately 21,000 medical encounters per month on the battlefields of Iraq. The Department of Defense aims to provide a life-long electronic health record to every member of the armed services. The internet-based system, Armed Forces Health Longitudinal Technology Application (AHLTA), is a clinical data repository with information on all beneficiaries that allows access from anywhere in the world.

The system is not just an electronic health record that is built around one hospital or even a local community of hospitals, it retains and shares information globally. AHLTA operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, securing medical data and allowing access to only authorized personnel. The \$1.2 billion system is currently deployed to 95% of the military, with full deployment to be completed before year end. The system will eventually serve more than 9 million U.S. service members, retirees and their families across the globe, with future plans to share military medical information with the Veterans Affairs Department.

The AHLTA system has a counterpart system titled, Theater Medical Information Program (TMIP), that is being tested in Iraq. The TMIP system allows field medics to use handheld devices to capture data during patient encounters and from there the patient record circulates safely and securely through the continuum of care. The TMIP system has literally taken the process from legal pad to an electronic record. Entering data electronically replaces the old paper field medical cards that were once tied to each patient. The cards were usually smeared or streaked, making it hard to read, and frequently came off the patient in transit.

The handheld devices also have the ability to retrieve and alter medical data of a service member via a dog-tag sized electronic information chip that is inserted into the handheld for processing. Once the processing is finished, the service member puts the dog tags back on. The information is then forwarded to a main database for the physician's review.

Since July 2005, information on about 186,866 patients in Iraq has been entered into the electronic health record system. Testing of new functions within the system, such as patient tracking and clinical references, are underway.

Familiar Places, New Faces



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Provisional Active

Family Medicine Grand Rounds

Speaker: Julie Dostal, MD & Abby Letcher, MD
Topic: Resident Research: Evaluating Change

During June's Grand Rounds, the third year residents, under the guidance of Drs. Julie Dostal and Abby Letcher, presented the results of their individual research projects. Each project was an evaluation of changes that can impact a practice.

Dr. Michelle Dilks presented her work looking at our Academic Chronic Care Collaborative model and how it affects team building within a practice. Dr. Nicole Sully studied the impact of group visits on patient enablement. Finally, Dr. Fiona Baldwin looked at the effects of parenting on the lifestyles and job satisfaction of male physicians.



A moment's insight is sometimes worth a life's experience.

Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809—1894)
Physician and writer

NPI Implementation

Penny Del Moral, Manager – Central Billing / Lehigh Valley Physician Business Services

The National Provider Identifier (NPI) is the new standard unique identifier for health care providers. NPI will replace the legacy provider identifiers (e.g., UPIN, License Number and Medicaid Provider Number). It will simplify transactions, including claims and coordination of benefits.

Providers were required to submit claims with NPI numbers effective May 23, 2007. It is recommended to use the NPI and a Legacy number such as UPIN until Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) complete testing of new software. For more information, please refer to the CMS website:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov>

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Please contact us with your presentations,
publications, letters to the editor and stories!

Forward them to Marcia.Shaffer@lvh.com

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