

July, 2008

# Bellevue Drug Co. News

[www.vargasbellevuedrug.com](http://www.vargasbellevuedrug.com)

## Bellevue Drug pharmacists react to FDA Alert on Tussionex

**March, 2008**, we reviewed an FDA Alert on the long-acting hydrocodone-containing cough product, marketed as Tussionex Pennkinetic Extended Release Suspension. The FDA had received reports of life-threatening adverse events and death in patients, including children, who had used this product.

**Recommendations and Considerations for Healthcare Professionals** include the following, as stated in the FDA Alert:

- Tussionex is contraindicated in patients less than 6 years old.
- Consult the prescribing information to determine the correct dose and dosing frequency of Tussionex.

- Prescribers should clearly state the prescribed volume in **milliliters**.
- Pharmacists should clearly state directions in **milliliters** on the label, double check volume conversions, provide a measure device that can deliver the volume in milliliters, as prescribed, and counsel patients how to correctly measure the suspension.
- Discuss with patient the amount of Tussionex to be given and the frequency of dosing. Instruct patients not to take and parents not to administer it more frequently than every 12 hours.

After reviewing the FDA Alert, Bellevue Drug has established policy regarding

prescriptions for Tussionex, which include: (1) not filling for patients under the approved age group of 6 years old; (2) we will be very specific with dosing instructions, in order to avoid patient misunderstanding of dosing directions; (3) provide our patients with an accurate measuring device to correspond to the prescribed dose; (4) provide patient education regarding the importance of taking this medication *exactly* as prescribed using an accurate measuring device.

Our pharmacists are committed to helping our mutual patients achieve the best healthy outcomes possible.

To view the FDA Alert in its entirety: <http://fda.gov/cder/drug/InfoSheets/HCP/hydrocodoneHCP.htm>.

**Calling our Pharmacists: 609-561-0825**

**During Hours:** Press “1”; At the prompt, Press “1” *again* to dictate a prescription; Press “2” to speak with our staff.

**After Hours:** Dial: **609-625-6868** and our On Call Pharmacist will return your call immediately.

**PHARMACY HOURS:** Mon-Fri: 9 am–9 pm; Sat: 9 am–6 pm; Sun: 9 am–Noon

**Reminder:**

***When dictating prescriptions, please speak slowly and repeat the order before hanging up. Thanks!***

# E-Prescribing Technology comes to Bellevue Drug

Bellevue Drug is pleased to announce that e-prescribing technology is here.

Healthcare providers know, that most patient information is sent and received via electronic format now. From hospital records, physician files, insurance benefits information and prescriptions, sending and receiving data electronically is getting to be the preference for all healthcare providers.

E-Prescribing capability at Bellevue Drug not only improves our service to your patients, but helps us to achieve our goal for patient safety and improved healthy outcomes.

This technology is widely supported by most insurers, hospitals and practitioners like yourself, as a means to greater patient safety and reduction in the possibility of transcribing errors.

Bellevue Drug is committed to the health and safety of our customers and this additional feature to our prescription processing system is another effective tool to assist our pharmacists and staff to deliver excellent service to our mutual patients.

If you have any questions regarding e-prescribing or any other prescription matter, our pharmacists are here to assist you.

## Meeting the highest standards for patient safety is Job One at Bellevue Drug

In order to meet JCAHO's high standards on Patient Safety, we at Bellevue Drug strive to remain compliant with the National Standards for Patient Safety Goals, as set forth each year by the Joint Commission. Our pharmacists agree that adhering to their **DO NOT USE** Abbreviation List is a very important step towards meeting these goals. As a convenience to our healthcare providers, we have printed this list here for your review. We hope you will also share this information with your staff, who are an important part of providing excellent care to our mutual patients.

### ***List of Abbreviations Not to be used in prescribing, as per the Joint Commission (JCAHO):***

- U, u
- IU
- Q.D., QD, q.d., qd
- Q.O.D., QOD, q.o.d., qod
- Trailing zero (X.0 mg)
- Lack of leading zero (.X mg)
- MS
- MSO4
- MgSO4

## JCAHO 2008 National Patient Safety Goals have Patient Safety Strategy

The Joint Commission's National Patient Safety Goals (NPSG) remain a central focus of Bellevue Drug's efforts to remain compliant as an accredited organization. The NPSG of 2008 addresses many aspects of patient care, including encouraging patients' active involvement in their own care as a patient safety strategy.

As healthcare professionals, we must provide the means for patients and their families to report concerns about safety and encourage them to do so. According to the Comprehensive Accreditation Manual for Home Care ('06-'07), they site, "Communication with patients and families about all aspects of their care, treatment, or services is an important characteristic of a culture of safety. When patients know what to expect, they are more aware of possible errors and choices. Patients can be an important source of information about potential adverse events and hazardous conditions." Bellevue Drug has been JCAHO Accredited since 1996.