



Specialty Medicine Compounding Pharmacy

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Competent Compounding

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Lisa Krass, PharmD (cand) February 2007

New Breast Cancer Study Shows Benefits in Survival Rate with Herceptin

A new study in the January 6 issue *The Lancet* discusses the use of Herceptin (trastuzumab) in patients with HER-2 positive early breast cancer. Herceptin is a monoclonal antibody that is used after the completion of chemotherapy. The Herceptin Adjuvant (HERA) Study was performed in London and included 5102 women. Herceptin was given for 1 year following chemotherapy. The study was designed to look at disease free survival after a period of 2 years with a secondary outcome of overall survival. The HERA Study concluded that a significant overall survival benefit was seen with Herceptin treatment as compared to survival alone.



What does this mean for me?

This study shows that for those patients with HER-2 positive, early stage breast cancer, treatment with Herceptin after your course of chemotherapy can increase your chance of overall survival. As always, talk with your doctor about what treatment options are right for you.

Source: Smith I, et al. 2-year follow-up of trastuzumab after adjuvant chemotherapy in HER2-positive breast cancer: a randomized controlled trial. *The Lancet* 2007;369:29-36.

Steps to a Breast Self-Exam

Women should perform a self breast exam once monthly in addition to yearly mammograms. These exams should be done at the same time each month, on the first day of your menstrual cycle, or on a day that's easy to remember.

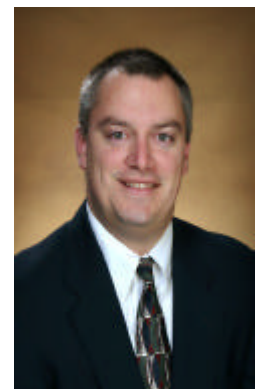
1. While in front of the mirror, examine breasts for normal size and coloring. Look for dimpling or bulging of skin or any changes in the nipple.
2. Next, raise your arms and look for the same changes.
3. Check for discharge by gently squeezing each nipple.
4. Lie down, and by using a firm touch examine breasts in such a pattern that covers the whole breast from armpit to cleavage and from collarbone to top of the abdomen.
5. Finally, perform the same examination while standing up. Most women do this step while in the shower.

If you find any abnormality, contact your physician as soon as possible. You can find a more detailed explanation of self breast exams at www.breastcancer.org.

Q and A with Kenny Walkup, RPh.

Q: Specialty Medicine Pharmacy does a lot of veterinary compounding. What led you into veterinary compounding?

A: I honestly didn't know it existed until I opened my own pharmacy. Veterinary compounding isn't something that's routinely taught in pharmacy schools. I started learning about it at various seminars I attended. Then, when veterinarians started calling the pharmacy asking questions about how we could help get pets their medicine, I started to learn more about it. Now veterinary compounding accounts for approximately 40% of the prescriptions we fill here.





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Q: What is the most exciting aspect of making medicine for animals?

A: The best part about compounding for animals is that I get to be imaginative in designing dosage forms for medications. We've made everything from biscuits to common suspensions and capsules to gels that you can put on the animal's ear. I've gotten to make medicine for all sorts of animals – dogs, cats, horses, ducks, and even making medication in peanut butter for rats! Veterinary compounding definitely lets me be creative in my practice of pharmacy.

Veterinary Corner: A Warning about Sugar-Free Products and Canine Health

With 2007 still being a relatively new year, many people in America are sticking to their resolution of eating healthier and dieting. This may mean that you now have an extra amount of sugar-free snacks in your pantry. We know that our four-legged friends like to have treats and some of you may be guilty of sneaking some “people food” under the table (we won't judge). However, veterinarians are warning dog owners about sharing their sugar-free treats with their pets.

In an article in the Journal of the American Veterinary Association, authors warn pet owners about the dangers of Xylitol, a sugar substitute used in sugar-free chewing gums and other items.

Common effects of the consumption of xylitol in dogs include vomiting and lethargy. However, it can cause such severe conditions as liver failure and death based



on the amount consumed. In the study of 8 dogs, over half died or had to be euthanized due to excess consumption of this sugar substitute.

The best way to prevent this is to keep the “people treats” for the people and let your dog have its own treats. However, if you do share with your pet every once in a while, check the label as many ingredients that are common in human food can be harmful to your pet. If you notice any change in your canine's health, please contact your pharmacist or veterinarian.

Hand Washing and Household Hygiene: A Review

-In most cases, plain soap is better than antibacterial soap for regular household use. This is because for the active antibacterial ingredient, Triclosan, to work, you would need to wash your hands for 2 minutes. Most American's only wash their hands for 10 seconds. With regular soap and water, you should wash for at least 30 seconds (sing the ABCs through twice!).

-Brands of soap that do not include triclosan are Dove®, Ivory®, and Aveeno®.

-Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are very effective for killing bacteria and viruses on the skin. The proper technique for using these cleansers is to put about ½ teaspoonful on your palm and rub all surfaces of your hands until they are dry. The hands are actually not sanitized until the alcohol dries.

-Remember that hand washing is the single most important step in preventing the spread of illness!



The demands of modern compounding have led to the creation of pharmacies devoted solely to this art. **Specialty Medicine Compounding Pharmacy** has been serving your community for over seven years. Here we spe-

cialize in bio-identical hormone replacement therapies and veterinary medicine, to name a few. We have all the facilities and equipment needed to make anything from topicals to capsules and sterile injectables. We do not ac-

cept insurance, but do provide claim forms with prescriptions we fill. So, next time a patient wants a compound you're unsure of - we'd be happy to serve them!

