BENEFIT study shows Betaferon reduces risk of developing multiple sclerosis

Schering announced results from the subgroup analysis of the BENEFIT* study which showed that Betaferon® (interferon beta-1b) 250mcg treatment reduced the risk of developing clinically definite MS (CDMS) consistently across all subgroups regardless of age, gender, steroid treatment or symptoms at onset of disease.

These data were part of the BENEFIT results, which showed that Betaferon 250mcg treatment reduced the risk of developing clinically definite MS (CDMS) by 50% compared with placebo. The BENEFIT trial tested patients presenting with one clinical episode suggestive of MS for a period of up to 24 months.

"In the BENEFIT study, we found that Betaferon reduced the risk of developing MS consistently throughout the study population. Additionally, we found that certain patient subgroups had an even better response to early treatment with Betaferon," said Dr. Chris Polman, Professor of Neurology, VU Medical Center, Amsterdam. Betaferon was very well accepted in the BENEFIT study, with 93% of patients completing the two-year study period. More than 95% of all patients completing the study have elected to continue with Betaferon as part of an open-label follow-up study.

For further information
Tel: +44 (0)845 609 6767,
Email: customer.care@schering.co.uk

Ipsen launches the access programme

Ipsen Ltd, the UK subsidiary of the Ipsen Group, has launched the access programme, a new, innovative and flexible medical education service. The key objectives of access are:

- to provide health professionals with 'access' to botulinum toxin training and clinical expertise
- to provide health professionals with 'access' to information resources and support for conditions where botulinum toxin is used
- to provide 'access' to information for people with conditions that are treated with botulinum toxin

The access programme encompasses a portfolio of support services, blending existing resources with various new elements that will become available in the future, including training courses and education tools.

For further information about the access programme, please contact: access Co-ordinator, Ipsen Ltd, 190 Bath Road, Slough, Berkshire SL1 3XE.
Email: access.coordinator@ipsen.com

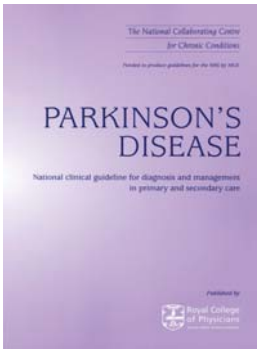
Guideline to improve care of Parkinson's patients

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) and the National Collaborating Centre for Chronic Conditions based at the Royal College of Physicians have launched a guideline on the diagnosis and management of Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's disease is estimated to affect 100–180 people per 100,000 of the population.

Recommendations include:

- People with suspected Parkinson's disease should be referred quickly and untreated to a specialist.
- The diagnosis of Parkinson's disease should be reviewed regularly and reconsidered if atypical clinical features develop.
- People with Parkinson's disease should have access to specialist nursing care.



Dr Carl Clarke, Clinical Advisor on the Guideline Development Group, said, "The NICE guidance will help to ensure that all patients with Parkinson's disease are seen by an expert. It will also provide support for all patients and carers from Parkinson's Disease Nurse Specialists and allow better access to rehabilitation services. It will ensure that expert clinicians have access to the latest tests to diagnose Parkinson's disease, and all appropriate drugs."

Price £28.00 (UK) £30.00 (overseas)
ISBN 1860162835
To order your copy call 020 7935 1174 ext 358 or visit http://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/pubs/brochures/pub_print_PD.htm

New booklet about botulinum toxin and spasticity

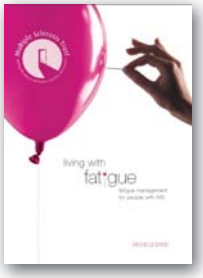
'Helping you to understand spasticity and the role of botulinum toxin' is a new booklet available from Ipsen Limited, the UK subsidiary of the Ipsen Group, for people with spasticity who have been prescribed botulinum toxin.

The booklet has been produced to help the patient learn more about their condition and also to understand how botulinum toxin can help their spasticity. It addresses what spasticity is and how it is treated, the use of botulinum toxin, and provides a list of some of the organisations that can provide further help and support, such as Different Strokes, HemiHelp, Scope and the Stroke Association.

Botulinum toxin type A (Dysport®) is indicated for focal spasticity including the treatment of arm symptoms associated with focal spasticity in conjunction with physiotherapy, but only in hospital specialist centres with appropriately trained personnel.

Copies of the booklet can be obtained from: Medical Information Department, Ipsen Ltd, 190 Bath Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 3XE. Tel: +44 (0)1753 627777, Email: medical.information.uk@ipsen.com

Living With Fatigue



The MS Trust has recently published a book to help people with MS who are affected by fatigue.

Fatigue is one of the commonest symptoms of MS and yet as an 'invisible' symptom, it is often misinterpreted or misunderstood by family, friends or colleagues. The book examines the many factors that can add to fatigue and provides practical ideas and suggestions to help people manage their own fatigue.

'Living With Fatigue' was written in conjunction with Michelle Ennis, an MS specialist occupational therapist, and is illustrated with comments by people with MS who know what it is like to live with fatigue.

Living With Fatigue is free. If you think this book would help any of your patients, they can order copies by sending their postal address to info@mstrust.org.uk or Tel: +44 (0)1462 476700.

BioStation IM combines incubator and inverted microscope in one compact bench-top unit

Nikon Instruments has launched a completely integrated 'hands-off' system for managing, observing and recording the growth of cells in culture. Biostation IM combines the precise environmental control capabilities of a high-performance CO2 incubator with the advanced optics needed for drift-free, live-cell imaging.

BioStation IM constantly maintains an optimum environment by avoiding fluctuations in temperature, humidity and gas concentration associated with the movement of cell cultures from an incubator to a microscope, which should improve the consistency of cell growth and reduce the variability of experimental data. Furthermore, the hands-off approach reduces the scope for contamination.

It has an optical system with a special anti-drift design that ensures images are always kept in sharp focus, enabling accurate time-lapse readings to be taken over a period of days.

Cultures can be imaged at both the macro and the micro 10x to 80x under phase contrast, using special lenses that provide the highest possible contrast with the least amount of 'halo'. It is also possible to observe the cells under epi-fluorescence illumination. Biostation IM comes in two versions with different lenses for work with plastic or thin bottom glass petri dishes. Viewing is via an integrated, digital camera, with images being made available via an external computer linked to the IM.

For more information contact Nikon Instruments Europe: Tel: +44 (0)208 247 1718, Email: info@nikon-instruments.com Web: www.nikon-instruments.com

What does freedom from seizures mean to you...?

The International Bureau for Epilepsy's Freedom in Mind Experience, supported by an education grant from UCB, encourages people with epilepsy to express what freedom from seizures would mean to them using pictures and to communicate their hopes and aspirations for a seizure-free future. It calls on people with epilepsy to work with their doctors towards better management of epilepsy.

Commenting on the campaign, Professor John Duncan, Professor of Neurology, Institute of Neurology and Medical Director, National Society for Epilepsy, said: "This graphically demonstrates the impact of epileptic seizures on lives and gives a glimpse of how these lives would be transformed if their epilepsy was controlled"

Healthcare professionals are urged to encourage anyone with epilepsy to get involved and to consider their own hopes and feelings about epilepsy in a way they may not have explored before.

Further information and entry forms can be requested by emailing: info@freedominmind.com