

# The Prudent Prescriber

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Pharm Reps ≠ Rational Prescribing

(PR)



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### Tamper-Resistant Prescriptions...on Hold

The federal legislation (part of an Iraq war funding bill) mandating "tamper-resistant prescriptions" for all Medicaid scripts to go into effect October 1, 2007 has been nixed for at least six months. This ill conceived law was dumped onto the individual states with little forethought regarding implementation. The impetus for this law is to prevent the fraud associated with modifying and copying prescriptions. There was little specific guidance to pharmacies or physicians regarding what a "tamper-resistant prescription" is. Hopefully when this government-run-amuck law reappears in the spring, it will be more carefully crafted.

### Vaccines: What's New?

☆ **Influenza:**

- Influenza supplies appear adequate this year. Our office has already received 70% of our total order.
- Give kids under 9, two doses of flu vaccine the first time they are immunized.
- FluMist is now approved for kids down to 2 years of age; it's actually cheaper this year: \$20/dose. Remember FluMist is contraindicated in kids with asthma and egg allergy.

☆ **Zostavax:**

- Indicated for immuno-competent adults 60 and over, single subcutaneous injection to decrease the occurrence of herpes zoster (by 50%) and post-herpetic neuralgia (by 66%).
- The number needed to vaccinate (NNV) to prevent one case of shingles is 60 and NNV=360 to prevent one case of post-herpetic neuralgia.
- \$186/dose; Medicare D, a hassle.

### Vaccines: What's in Short Supply?

- ☆ **ProQuad (MMRV)** is unavailable. Unclear when available.
- ☆ **Varivax** – delays of two to three weeks in shipping.
- ☆ **VAQTA (Hep A)** – Pediatric formulation not available until March 2008.

**Antibiotics do NOT**

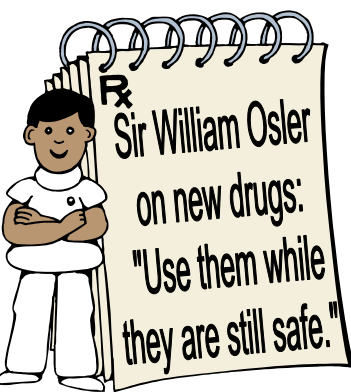


**help acute bronchitis**

**β-blockers in post-MI save lives**

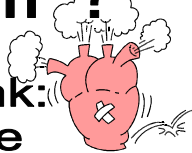


Pill splitters save big



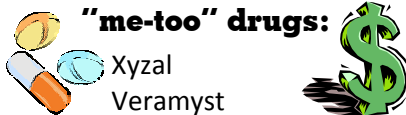
## CHF?

Think:



- Ace**
- Aldactone**
- B-blocker**
- Dig**
- Diuretic**

### Avoid these expensive "me-too" drugs:



- Xyzal
- Veramyst
- Cardura XL
- Ultram ER
- Ambien CR
- Paxil CR
- Coreg CR

**Treat diabetics BP to 130/80**



**now available**  
on the  
**Generic Marquee**

- Coreg** → carvedilol
- Toprol XR** → metoprolol ER
- Lotrel** → amlodipine/benazepril
- Norvasc** → amlodipine
- Ambien** → zolpidem
- Flonase** → fluticasone nasal



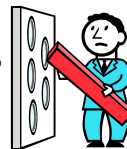
## What's New?

- Ø **Xyzal** (levocetirizine), the levo-isomer of Zyrtec; promoted as faster and longer acting – probably not for most patients. Guess what? Zyrtec goes generic in December 2007 and eventually will go OTC. “Me too.”
- Ø **Pylera** (bismuth 140mg, metronidazole 125mg, tetracycline 125mg per capsule)
  - Still another addition to the H. pylori treatment regimens.
  - Increasing (>20%) failure rate of current first line triple therapy.
  - Pylera has all three products in one capsule. Give three capsules QID plus omeprazole 20mg BID; a little simpler than Helidac: two bismuth, one metronidazole and one tetracycline QID plus PPI BID.

Drug	Efficacy	Cost *	# of Pills
Pylera	87–92%	\$266	120 / 10 days
Helidac	77–82%	\$294	224 / 14 days
Component therapy	80–90%	\$17	160 / 10 days

\*does not include PPI cost

## What Doesn't Work?



### Folic acid for prevention of colo-rectal adenomas ([JAMA](#), June 6, 2007)

- 1021 men and women with a recent history of colorectal adenoma (but no colon cancer) were randomized to 1mg of folic acid per day or placebo and followed for two to five years.
- Folic acid supplementation did not decrease the risk of adenoma occurrence.
- The folic acid group had a **greater** frequency of multiple adenomas than the placebo group.

### ATB Prophylaxis for Recurrent UTI in Kids ([JAMA](#) 2007; 298:179-186)

- Retrospective cohort study of children aged 6 or younger (90% female) who had a first UTI and were followed, some with ATB prophylaxis, some without.
- White race, age 3 to 5 years and grade 4 to 5 vesicoureteral reflux (VUR) were associated with increased risk of recurrent UTI.
- Gender and grade 1 to 3 VUR were not associated with risk of recurrence.
- Antimicrobial prophylaxis was **not** associated with increased lower risk of recurrent UTI, but prophylaxis was associated with an increased risk of resistant infections.



Sir William Osler

*“Do not rashly use every new product of which the peripatetic siren sings. Consider what surprising reactions may occur in the laboratory from the mixing of unknown substances.”*

~ Sir William Osler

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