

GRAND ROUNDS

Grand Rounds will not be held during the month of August. Grand Rounds will resume Sept. 3.

MEDICAL UPDATE: Inhaler Conversion

Albuterol Metered Dose Inhalers or MDIs, commonly used in the treatment of bronchospasm, are being modified. The Food and Drug Administration recently released a public health advisory informing patients, caregivers and healthcare workers about the phase out of albuterol metered dose inhalers in their current form. As of Dec. 31, 2008, chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) propelled albuterol inhalers will no longer be available in the market and will be replaced by hydrofluoroalkane HFA propelled albuterol inhalers. The new HFA inhalers may be different in taste and feel, and will require extra steps in their use and care as this may affect the amount of drug that is delivered.

CFC MDI substitution by HFA propellant inhalers is part of complying with an international agreement designed to protect the Earth's ozone layer.

HFA propelled inhalers may feel softer and can also build up in the device. This is secondary due to a smaller opening in the spray mechanism. This requires that the patient or caregiver prime and clean the inhaler to ensure that the amount of drug delivered is not significantly reduced. All HFA inhalers must be primed with first

time use and after certain lengths of discontinued use. Cleaning should be done weekly according to package instructions. In addition, patients who are used to the open-mouth technique must be taught to use closed-mouth technique or a spacer/valved holding chamber (VHC). Open mouth technique is not effective for the new HFA inhalers due to the nature of the spray.

The three currently HFA propelled albuterol devices include Proair HFA, Proventil HFA and Ventolin HFA. Xopenex HFA containing levalbuterol has also been available since 2005. There will be no generic albuterol HFA inhalers for several years, thus the available products may be more expensive than the CFC propelled albuterol devices. Supply should be adequate as manufacturers have gradually increased production.

These changes translate into increased need for patient education when prescribing these devices. Patient education regarding these changes will help prevent an increase in asthma morbidity due to incorrect techniques and care.

For more information on changes, contact Tanya Martinez, M.D. at tanya.martinez@utsouthwestern.edu.

CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER

For consultations,
to admit a patient,
schedule an ambulatory
appointment, or to
arrange a transfer, call
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HOSPITAL UPDATE: Children's Legacy opens inpatient units

Children's Medical Center Legacy in Plano will open its inpatient hospital on Aug. 19. The hospital features 24 inpatient beds, four procedural/operating suites and a 16-bed Emergency Services department. Initially Legacy will treat low-acuity patients and will expand services, acuity and clinical offerings over time.

UT Southwestern hospitalists will provide 24-hour inpatient coverage for 12 beds and consultations for primary care physicians. The remaining 12 beds will be reserved for primary care physicians who choose to admit to their own service.

Other services available at the Legacy campus include outpatient services, language access, child life, social work, guest relations, pastoral care and a family resource library.

For more information on services offered at Children's Legacy or to make a referral, call 888-730-DOCS (888-730-3627).