

May 2011

Chemist On Call

Meeting Railway Group Standard Guidance GE/GN8570



Herbal Medicine

Many people believe that herbal medicines or products claimed by manufacturers to be 'natural' are safer than conventional or 'synthetic' medicines. However, these medicines are just as likely to have an effect on the body and should always be used with care. From **April 2011**, all manufactured herbal medicines sold in the UK will be required to be registered or licensed in order to protect the consumer, in the same way that conventional medicines are licensed.

Herbal medicines may affect your ability to carry out your normal duties by causing side effects or by interacting with other medicines that you may take and must always be reported to Chemist On Call for our pharmacists to check that safety will not be compromised.

Drugs & Driving



It's not just illegal drugs that can affect a person's ability to drive and operate machinery safely.

Medicines prescribed by your doctor, bought from a pharmacy or the internet may also make it dangerous to get behind the wheel of

a car by causing side effects such as dizziness or drowsiness. If you are found by the police to be unfit to drive due to medication you have taken, you could be prosecuted under the Road Traffic Act and face a fine, ban or even the loss of your licence.

Even products which seem innocuous such as pain killers or cough and cold remedies may make you unfit to drive.

Chemist On Call's medication checking service will ensure that you are safe to drive and safe to work.

Hay Fever and Allergies



For those of you embracing the sunny weather of recent weeks, spare a thought for the 15-20% of Britons who suffer every year from hay fever or other seasonal allergies. Symptoms such as itchy eyes, sneezing, runny or blocked nose

can become very severe when the pollen count is high. There are a range of treatments available both from your doctor and over the counter from your pharmacist including nose sprays, eye drops and antihistamine tablets, and these can help to alleviate the symptoms.

However, it is important to remember that certain antihistamines can cause drowsiness or dizziness and workers in safety critical roles must check with Chemist On Call that their medication does not adversely affect their ability to perform normal duties.

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Body Building & Sports Supplements

The market is overloaded with a vast range of nutritional products and supplements marketed specifically for losing fat, gaining muscle and enhancing performance. However, there is widespread concern amongst the medical community that very few of these products enhance performance and some may even cause harm.

The truth of the matter is that some supplements are not manufactured with the same degree of quality control that would normally be expected for such products. They may also be contaminated by potentially toxic ingredients and will not have undergone testing for safety and efficacy. Leading athletes and sports dieticians believe that there is no substitute for proper training and good nutrition and you should always consult your doctor before taking any dietary supplement or product which claims to enhance performance or increase weight loss or gain. If you are taking supplements you must check them with Chemist On Call for side effects.

Malaria

Malaria is a preventable but extremely serious illness which kills millions of people worldwide every year and is caused by a parasite which is transmitted via the bite of an infected mosquito. The disease can be prevented by taking steps to avoid being bitten and by taking antimalarial medication before, during and after a trip to affected areas.

The type of antimalarial medication required depends on the area being visited and you must seek up to date information about this and any other vaccinations you might need from a healthcare professional at least eight weeks before travel to ensure you are properly protected.



Antimalarials can cause nausea, vomiting and dizziness but it is vitally important to take the medication regularly and complete the full course to prevent infection. Medications such as those to prevent malaria must be reported to Chemist On Call to ensure you are safe to work.

Symptoms of malaria include fever, headache and vomiting and can appear anything from ten days to six months after a bite. If you develop any such symptoms any time after your return from a trip to a malarious area abroad, it is extremely important that you inform the doctor so that malaria can be ruled out.

For more information visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.malariahotspots.co.uk.

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