Dear Dr. LIANG,

TGA: Topiramate - Adverse Events Associated with Use to Assist with Weight Loss

Your attention is drawn to the report received by the Australia Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) of a patient who was prescribed topiramate to assist with weight loss, presenting to the emergency department with acute closed angle glaucoma soon after commencing topiramate. This is a serious and known side effect of topiramate therapy.

The TGA has not approved the use of topiramate to assist with weight loss and is advising health professionals and consumers that its use for this indication is associated with serious adverse events. In Australia, topiramate is only indicated for the treatment of epilepsy or the prevention of migraine headaches. TGA encouraged health professionals to report any adverse events associated with the use of topiramate, including for off-label indications.

For details, please refer to TGA’s website:

In Hong Kong, a total of 15 topiramate-containing products are registered and are prescription-only medicines. The approved indications in Hong Kong are for the treatment of epilepsy and prophylaxis of migraine headache. You are reminded that topiramate is not assessed in its effectiveness and its safety for the purpose of weight loss, and there are risks with this off-label use. Topiramate should only be used as an antiepileptic and as an antimigraine. Department of Health will keep vigilance against any updated safety issues related to the drug.

Please remind your members to report any adverse events caused by the drugs to the Adverse Drug Reaction Monitoring Unit of Department of Health (tel. no.: 2319 8633, fax: 2147-0457 or email: adr@dh.gov.hk). For details, please refer to the website: http://www.psdh.gov.hk at Drug Office under “Reporting an Adverse Drug Reaction”.

Yours sincerely,

(Ms Pamela LI)
for AD(D)

We are committed to providing quality client-oriented service