

Pharmacy Benefit News

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COMMENTARY | SPECIAL ISSUE – COMMON REMEDIES – TRUE OR FALSE?

The staff at Pro Pharma requested that we talk about common remedies and whether there was any science behind them? The bottom line was that some staff members have their favorite remedies and wanted to know if they were correct, or more specifically, prove them right. The session was very positive, so we decided to summarize our discussion in this Pharmacy Benefit News. (It is important to note that one positive result does not change the science. Random results are always possible but have a higher risk of a negative outcome.)

Cuts – Krazy Glue to seal small wounds

Pro – Stops bleeding in small cuts; Associated with less scarring than other methods; Dissolves within days, or with nail polish remover; Studied as a component of elastic gel used in surgery (like a band-aid)

Con – Contains cyanoacrylate that can irritate skin, kill skin cells, and aggravate infections; Poison if swallowed

Decision – Positive; Science supports this

Pro – Peroxide is an antibacterial solution,

Con – Peroxide or rubbing alcohol used to clean an injury harms the skin and delays healing

Decision – Negative; Treat these injuries with cool running water and mild soap. Rinse for 5 minutes to remove debris, dirt and bacteria.

Treatment of Burns – Butter

Pro – None

Con – Butter or any greasy ointment on burns makes things worse; Grease slows the release of heat from the skin, leading to greater damage; Can contain bacteria

Decision – Negative; The science is behind cool water, antibiotic ointment, aloe vera;

Note: To avoid infections, don't pop blisters

Treatment of Burns – Toothpaste

Pro – None

Con – Contains calcium and peppermint acting as a barrier and an irritant; Increased risk of infections and damaged skin tissue

Decision – Negative

Treatment of Burns – Honey

Pro – Honey can soothe burns; Honey has antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties to promote healing

Con – None

Decision – Positive; Often used in combinations

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COMMENTARY |



OR FALSE? (Part 2)

Treatment of Burns – Aloe Vera

Pro – Heals 1st and 2nd degree burns; Aloe is anti-inflammatory, promotes circulation, and inhibits growth of bacteria

Con – None

Decision – Positive; Often used in combinations

Treatment of Nose Bleeds – Throw your head back to stop a nosebleed

Pro – None

Con – Throwing your head back causes blood to run down the back of the throat, and you may swallow it; Swallowed blood irritates your stomach and may cause vomiting

Decision – Negative; Stay upright – this reduces the blood pressure in your nostrils; The science is behind tilting your head forward, pinching your nostrils together while leaning slightly forward

Treatment of Sore Throat and Cough – Hot Tequila and Honey

Pro – Agave in Tequila reduces bacteria and relieves sore throats; Warm teas mixed with honey is a cough suppressant and soothes a sore throat (anti-inflammatory), reduces sinus mucus, and hydrates

Con – None

Decision – Anecdotal, but no or little scientific basis

Treatment of Cough – Purple Onion (for Cough)

Pro – Onions are promoted to cure colds, coughs, high fevers, sore throats, and boost immunity

Con – None

Decision – Anecdotal, but no or little scientific basis

Treatment of Sore Throat – Tomatoes Wrapped Around Face for Tonsil Aches

Pro – None

Con – Tomato juice is acidic, so it is a poor choice for sore throats and tonsil aches

Decision – Negative

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Pharmacy Analyses



Problem: A client wanted to submit rebates for specialty medical claims similar to what they were doing for the Specialty Pharmacy Claims. However, they were unable to identify which of the medical encounter claims for specialty medications were rebatable.

Methodology: We included rebate analysis in the Comprehensive Medical Specialty Analyses. A file of the rebatable encounter claims was made available for the client to submit to the manufacturers. The file included the NDC, manufacturer, effective and term dates along with all other applicable sterilized encounter claims data. The file also included a filter for potential 340b providers to remove from the file.

Alternatively, we also recommended that the client could include the rebatable specialty medical encounter claims with the pharmacy claims. Then the PBM could submit all the claims to the manufacturers for rebate reconciliation.

Outcome: The client was able to increase their rebate receipts by submitting both pharmacy and medical rebatable claims. The process was automated so that there was a minimal amount of manual data collection and processing.

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COMMENTARY | COMMON REMEDIES – TRUE OR FALSE? (Part 3)

Treatment of Menstrual Cramps – Oregano

Pro - Possible benefit, but not proven; Promoted to treat GI disorders and menstrual cramps

Con – More effective treatment is herbal teas like chamomile and peppermint as anti-inflammatories

Treatment of Headaches – Witch Hazel

Pro – Contains tannins, oils that lessen inflammation, draw tissue together and slow bleeding; Anti-inflammatory benefit when often used with a cold, wet cloth

Con – Headaches often caused by dehydration, so hydration is a better option

Decision – Anecdotal benefit, but no scientific support; Sometimes used so that people don't overuse pain medications

Vicks Vapo Rub™ on Forehead to Treat Headaches

Pro – Small amount of Vicks on temples and forehead to relieve headaches; Menthol scent releases pressure in the head; Also used in humidifiers and vaporizers

Con – None

Decision – Anecdotal benefit, but no scientific support

Vicks Vapo Rub™ to Treat Foot Fungus

Pro – Vicks increases circulation;

Con – None

Decision – Slightly positive; 12 weeks of daily applications eradicated the fungus in 5 of 18 people and reduced it in 10 others (June 2011, J. of Am Board of Family Med)

Onychomycosis (a fungus) invades toenails, and burrows in the skin under the nail; It thrives in warm, damp environments; It causes fungal infections and is associated with advanced aging, psoriasis, athlete's foot, nail polish infections, and injuries. Topical antifungal cure rate is ca. 35%; Oral meds cure is 55- 70% in 10 months, but in 15-20% the infection returned within a few months

Vicks Vapo Rub™ to Treat Ear-Aches

Place a small amount of Vicks into cotton ball and place in ear for several hours, several times a day

Pro – Reduces pain and prevents infection

Con – None

Decision – Slightly positive; Use APAP (i.e., Tylenol) for pain and/or treat the infection

Vicks Vapo Rub™ to Treat Stomach Aches

Rub Vicks over the stomach to reduce the aching

Pro – Menthol and eucalyptus oils soothe sore muscles and increase circulation

Con – None

Decision – Slightly positive; Unclear if this is a placebo effect or a calmative

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Pro Pharma is a woman owned healthcare analytics and consulting firm. Established in 1986, Pro Pharma's services are built on a foundation of data analytics, which are

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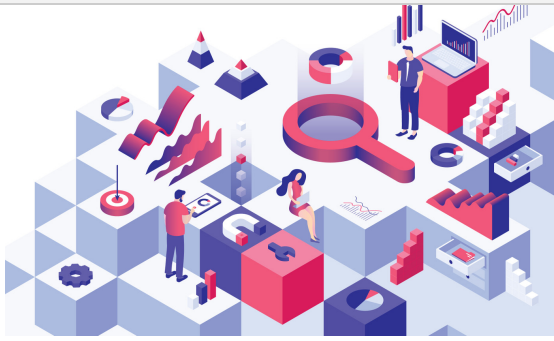
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