

|Bulletin Board|

Early warning system

"Did you know that an outbreak of rotavirus infection has been reported among small children in Khabarovsk, Russia? Since January 1, 2007, over 170 children under the age of 5 have been admitted to local hospitals. This number is twice as large as expected at this time of year. Physicians believe that the virus was spread by contaminated apples and mandarin oranges."

This report may seem of little relevance to clinical practice in Canada, but a report similar to this one first described an outbreak of a mysterious respiratory illness in China in 2003, the illness we now know as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS).

Both of these reports come from ProMED-mail (Program for Monitoring Emergency Diseases), which is an Internet-based reporting system dedicated to rapid global dissemination of information on outbreaks of infectious disease and acute exposures to toxins that affect human health, including those in animals and plants grown for food or animal feed. By providing early warning of outbreaks of emerging and re-emerging diseases, public health precautions at all levels can be taken in a timely manner to prevent epidemic transmission and to save lives.

ProMED-mail is an official program of the International Society for Infectious Diseases. Subscriptions to the listserve are available free of charge. For more information, see www.promedmail.org.

Tool kit

The College of Family Physicians of Canada recently launched an on-line tool kit that is intended to be a resource to all family physicians as they contemplate the future of their practices. It will be of particular interest to those who are involved in the development of new or changing family practice models. Areas covered include remuneration, governance, interdisciplinary collaboration, continuity and comprehensiveness of care, and information technology. The website is designed to be interactive. Users can join secured discussion forums, submit documents, and access links to helpful sites. The tool kit can be accessed at <http://toolkit.cfpc.ca>.

Waist not

Cardiometabolic risk factors are associated with the development of cardiovascular disease and diabetes. These risk factors include the following:

- "classic" factors, such as smoking, high blood pressure, elevated blood glucose, and high low-density lipoprotein cholesterol;

- "emerging" factors, such as abdominal obesity, low levels of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, and high levels of triglycerides.

Waist circumference is a convenient measure of abdominal obesity that is unrelated to height. A high waist circumference is associated with cardiovascular disease and diabetes risk independently of age and body mass index. Each increase in waist circumference of 14 cm in men and 14.9 cm in women increases the likelihood of an adult's having cardiovascular disease by between 21% and 40%. Women should have a waist circumference of 88 cm (35 inches) or less. Men should have a waist circumference of 102 cm (40 inches) or less.

For more information, see the Canadian Obesity Network at www.obesitynetwork.ca or the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada at www.heartandstroke.ca.

Canadian Adverse Reaction Newsletter

The latest *Canadian Adverse Reaction Newsletter* is available on-line at www.healthcanada.gc.ca/carn.

Topics covered in this issue include the following:

- levofloxacin for dysglycemia and liver and biliary disorders,
- domperidone for heart rate and rhythm disorders,
- a case presentation on green tea extract and hepatotoxicity, and
- a summary of advisories from August 18 to November 14, 2006.

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Bulletin canadien des effets indésirables

Bulletin canadien des effets indésirables 2007;17(1) est disponible à www.santecanada.gc.ca/bcei. Dans ce numéro:

- Lévo-floxacine: dysglycémie et troubles hépatiques
- Dompéridone: troubles de la fréquence et du rythme cardiaques
- Présentation de cas: extrait de thé vert et hépatotoxicité
- Sommaire des avis du 18 août jusqu'au 14 novembre 2006.

Pour recevoir gratuitement par courriel le Bulletin et les Avis sur les produits de santé, inscrivez-vous à la liste MedEffect. Rendez-vous à l'adresse www.santecanada.gc.ca/medeffect.