

# Recent Publications and Documents

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## Drugs for the elderly

Many elderly people often have concomitant illnesses and this can lead to the prescription of several different medicines at the same time. While many of these drugs help improve the survival and quality of life of elderly people, it is estimated that as many as one-fifth of patients entering a geriatric ward of a general hospital have symptoms attributable to effects from prescribed drugs.

The aim of *Drugs for the elderly* is to promote drug use that is efficacious and safe. Presented in the form of a pocket-size book, it is a convenient guide to possible side-effects of those drugs most often used in treating the elderly. For doctors, it constitutes a source of essential facts for safe prescribing. For pharmacists and nurses, it provides a guide on what the patient needs to know, and is a quick reference to the many differences in the treatment of young and old. It also points to alternative treatments which are equally effective or safer.

The most effective way to ensure the appropriate use of prescription drugs is through the training of health personnel, and this book will be indispensable for medical, pharmacy and nursing schools around the world.

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*Drugs for the elderly: second edition. WHO Regional Publications, European Series, Number 71. ISBN 92 890 1335 4 Price: Sw.fr. 32.-.*

## Rapid examination methods against counterfeit and substandard drugs

The provision of safe and effective pharmaceutical products of good quality is vitally important for health care services, for use in the diagnosis, treatment or prevention of disease. Unfortunately, the expansion of international trade has led to the infiltration of counterfeit and substandard drugs into many markets.

This manual describes rapid analytical methods for the detection of counterfeit and substandard drugs. It also gives easy-to-follow directions on how to

identify abnormalities in external packaging, outer appearance and contents of fake products, and how to inspect for tampering. These rapid examination methods are also complemented by instructions on the application of organoleptic inspection and thin layer chromatography. It is emphasized that any enforcement action involving counterfeit or substandard products should only be undertaken after a complete official laboratory analysis in accordance with national legal provisions in vigour.

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*Rapid examination methods against counterfeit and substandard drugs. Available from the Japan International Corporation of Welfare Services (JICWELS), Shinjuku Takasago Bldg. 10F, 16-5 Tomihisa-cho Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162, Japan. Fax number: 03 3225 6590.*

## Countering counterfeiting

Counterfeiting is one of the fastest growing economic crimes worldwide. It threatens the developed and developing world alike, undermining trade relations, scaring off vital new investment and endangering public health and safety. Legitimate manufacturers who invest heavily in the research and development of a product can suffer devastating losses and this leads to discouragement of further research spending, and the consequent slowing of technological innovation.

*Countering counterfeiting: a guide to protecting and enforcing intellectual property rights* provides an overview of how owners of intellectual property rights may defend themselves against counterfeiting. It describes the nature, scale and impact of product counterfeiting and outlines strategies for its prevention. Where companies have become the victims of counterfeiters, information is given on potential action.

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*Countering counterfeiting: a guide to protecting and enforcing intellectual property rights. Available from the Counterfeiting Intelligence Bureau, International Chamber of Commerce, Maritime House, 1 Linton Road, Barking, Essex IG1 8HG, United Kingdom. Fax number: 44 14953 2902. e-mail: pub@iccwbo.org*

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## **Malaria: a manual for community health workers**

Community health workers can help in many ways to treat malaria and prevent new cases. This manual concentrates on activities that are within the competence of such health workers and feasible and affordable at the community level. Information is provided on the disease and its transmission, and on treatment schedules for different age groups, including advice in the event of treatment failure.

The manual will be particularly useful in training courses, or as a support to health education in the community. Practical rules for organizing anti-malaria work and community action to reduce the incidence of malaria are set out in two annexes.

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*Malaria: a manual for community health workers. WHO, Geneva, 1996. ISBN 92 4 154491 0. Price Sw.fr. 16.- (developing countries Sw.fr. 11.20.-).*

## **Guidelines for the management of drug-resistant tuberculosis**

About one-third of the world's population is infected by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and, in 1995, there

were nine million new cases of tuberculosis with three million deaths.

Effective tuberculosis control can be implemented using inexpensive, simple and largely standardized techniques, coupled with the managerial skills to implement them on a large intervention scale. Since 1992, the WHO Global Tuberculosis Programme has developed a strategy which has been successful in meeting the challenge of large-scale tuberculosis control.

One major obstacle to the successful implementation of treatment campaigns is the existence of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis and the need to use second-line drugs. Once a country has decided that it has a clear need for these drugs, they should be provided by a specialized unit working in close connection with a laboratory able to carry out cultures and reliable susceptibility tests of *M. tuberculosis*. The present handbook gives clear advice on this important issue.

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*Guidelines for the management of drug-resistant tuberculosis. Unpublished document WHO/TB/96.210 (Rev.1) 1997. Price Sw.fr. 15.- (developing countries Sw.fr. 10.50).*