

EDITORIAL

KiDrug Alert

ABSTRACT

“KiDrug Alert” is a new initiative of experts in pediatric therapeutics. Its main goal is to improve drug safety in children by disseminating evidence-based knowledge in the field to healthcare professionals and parents, via an open-access website.

Issues of drug development, effectiveness and safety in children have gained considerable attention in the last two decades. It is estimated, that 75-80% of drugs given to children has not been adequately tested for safety and efficacy in the pediatric age group. The increasing interest in pediatric clinical pharmacology stems from several factors. These include increased public awareness to drug safety; the unraveling of the human genome, which has stimulated the fields of pharmacogenetics and pharmacogenomics; discoveries in drug ontogeny (developmental pharmacology; the study of changes in pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics in infants and children); the growing population of children with chronic illness. Dramatic changes in legislation have been put in place. These were designed to stimulate safety and efficacy testing of new drugs in children and aim to facilitate the labeling and use of new and existing medications in the pediatric population. To address the urgent need in research and dissemination of knowledge in this field, a few training programs dedicated to pediatric clinical pharmacology have been established in North America.

In this new column of the Canadian Journal of Clinical Pharmacology, entitled “KiDrug Alert”, we will report on new knowledge in various aspects of pediatric drug safety, followed by a commentary by a member of “KiDrug Alert” panel or an invited expert. The evidence-based articles reviewed will be directed for healthcare professionals as well as to parents, and will be accessible to the general public through the open-access format of the Canadian Journal of Clinical

Pharmacology. The Editorial Board of KiDrug Alert includes international experts in pediatric clinical pharmacology and related fields.

In this first column of “KiDrug Alert”, Dr. Gideon Koren, from The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, presents the “10 Commandments” for safe prescribing and drug administration to children. Every parent should ask these questions prior to administering his/her child with any medication, to prevent avoidable errors. Potential errors may happen at any stage, from prescribing to drug dispensing or administration. It is hoped, that the “10 Commandments” will facilitate a new dialogue between parents and the physicians and the team caring for their children. While drug errors are multi-factorial, there is no question that parent involvement in the process is a potent preventive measure.

We hope that you will find this new column a reliable, up-to-date and useful source of information in different areas of pediatric clinical pharmacology, and welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,

Yaron Finkelstein, MD

Editor

KiDrug Alert

The Canadian Journal of Clinical Pharmacology