POLICY æ PRACTICE

Funding Stem Cell Research

Some states are looking to follow in California's footsteps by attracting scientists to their states to conduct research on human embryonic stem cells. The governors of New Jersey and Connecticut have already announced their proposals to spend millions to entice stem cell researchers to their states, and a New York state senator wants to ask the state's voters for approval of a \$1 billion stem cell research initiative. California voters recently approved a measure to spend nearly \$3 billion on embryonic stem cell research over the next 10

years. Sean Tipton, spokesman for the Coalition for the Advancement of Medical Research said these activities are good news, given the federal policy on stem cell research; however, his organization questions whether a state-by-state approach makes sense. Researchers will have to figure out the different rules for grants in each state and could waste time and money on these administrative hurdles, he said.

Contaminated Stem Cells Lines

The currently available lines of human embryonic stem cells are contaminated

Menostar™ (estradiol transdermal system)

Rx only

IMARY OF PRESCRIBING INFORMATION

ESTROGENS INCREASE THE RISK OF ENDOMETRIAL CANCER

Conscience investment of the instance of estimation of the instance of the instance of the instance instance instance. In the instance of the instance instance instance instance instance of the instance instance instance of the instance instance instance of the instance of plus medroxyprogeserure acetate relative to paracos, it is unitariant finding applies to younger postmenopausal women or to women taking estroge alone therapy. (See CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY, Clinical Studies.) alone merapy (cee CLINICAL PHARMACUUS); Clinical studies.) Other doese of or comjazatie storgors with medioxyposterore acatate, an other combinations and disage forms of estrogens and progesties were not studie in the WHI clinica is and, in the abacene of comparable date, these risks should be assumed to be similar. Because of these risks, estrogens with or without pro persins should be prescribed at the flowest effective doese and for the shortset dura tion consistent with treatment goals and risks for the individual woman.

INDICATIONS AND USAGE

Menostar¹⁰ is indicated for the prevention of postmenopausal osteoporosis. Therapy should be considered only for women at significant risk of osteoporosis. Non-estrogen medications should be carefully considered.

Meutations shown as well-CONTRAINCEATONS Menostar^{1W} should not be used in women with any of the following con-1. Undigensed anormal pential bleeding. 2. Known, suspected estrogen-dependent neoplasia. Nurvin vi suspecteu esurgen-dependent neopassa.
 Active dep viel triombosis, publicationary embolism or a history of these conditions.
 Active or recent (e.g., within the past year) arterial thromboembolic disease (e.g., stroke, myocardial infraction).
 Liver dystinction or disease.

- b. Lever dysfunction or disease.
 7. Menotadr¹⁴ should not be used in patients with known hypersensibily to its ingradents. Shownor assupered organapy. These is no indication for Mestelwith in pregnancy. There appears to be little or no increased risk of third delets in children born to women who have used storopers and progestitis from onail contraceptives inadive-tently during early pregnancy (See PRECAUTIONS.)

ee BOXED WARNINGS.

PDACM WARNINGS. Cardiovascular disorders. Estrogen and estrogen/progesh therapy have been associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular events such as myocardial infarction and stroke, as well as venous thrombosis and pulmonary embolism (venous thromboembolism or VTE). Should any of these occur or be suspected, estrogens should be discontin-

ueu immediately. Risk tactors for arterial vascular disease (e.g., hypertension, diabetes mellitus, tobac o use, hypercholesterolemia, and obesity) and/or venous thromboembolism (e.g. personal history or family history of VTE, obesity, and systemic lupus erythemato sus) should be manged appropriately.

Sub should be inallared appropriately. Connary heart liseses and should be appropriately and the should be appropriately appropriate of the should be appropriat

ball interactions and strokes has been observed in women receiving Ls compared to Ethicial Statistics. In the CEMPA substudy of WHI an increased risk of coronary heart disease (HD) events (defined as non-tatal myocardial interaction and CH doethi was observed in women receiving CEMPA compared to women receiving placebo (37 vs. 30 per 10 hs asseme having 1) MHI an increased risk of been ball was observed in the constraint workating the constraint of the constraint of the same receiving CEMPA compared to women receiving placebo (27 vs. 21 per 10 hs asseme having 1) MHI an increase in field was observed after the risk conserved in promet receiving CEMPA compared to women receiving placebo (27 vs. 21 per 10,000 women-years). The increase in risk was observed after the risk year and persisted (Discourge 2 sing) per day) femomentiation accurately accurate the same receiving CEMPA compared to women receiving placebo (27 vs. 21 per 10,000 women-years). The increase in risk was observed after the risk ware and persisted (Discourge 2 sing) per day) femomentation cardiovacular desame. There were more CIO events in the CEMPA received group than in the placebo group in y one women from the original HERS trial agreed to participate in an open table deten-sion of HERS, HERS II. Average of low work in the SIM here and versita. In a CEMPA regroup and the placebo group in the original ether of a trial of 88 years overall. RBRS of CIO events were comparable among women in the CEMPA regroup and the placebo group in HERS in the and event and the total cancer of the proteint ethers of round and round. In the CEMPA regroup and the head origin that in the comparable among women in the CEMPA regroup and the placebo group in HERS in the and event. And the CEMPA regroup and the head origin that in the orderable among under the rest cancer of the proteint and besits. There been shown in a large propos-tion course of the proteint and besits of nontain myocardial among women in the clinical trial in the in toncrease the trias of nontain m

monary embolism, and thromopohlebits. Honess thrombomolosm (HTE) In the Wonner's Health Initiality (WHI) study, an increase in VTE has been observed in women receiving Economic to backbon. These observations are preliminary. (See CLINCAL PHANHACELORY, Clinical Studies.) Into ECONFR assisted of WHI, a Schwares, and the transmission of the schwares and the s

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alignant neoplasms dometrial cancer the use of unopposed estrogens in women with intact uteri has been associated with increased risk of endometrial cancer. The reported endometrial cancer risk among reported estrogen users is also of the top 12 and preserving and the structures to mo significant increased risk associated with use of estrogeness for less than one any the structures of the structure with user of estrogeness for less than one any the structures of the structure with user of estrogeness for less than one any the top the top ways one and this risk has been shown to per-st for at less it to 15 years after estrogen therapy is discontinued. This removes the any mark top the structure and the structure of the structures of the st or at less it to 15 years after estrogen therapy is discontinued.

sist for at least 8 to 15 years after estrogen therapy is discontinued. Clinical surveillance of all women taking estrogen/progenics combinations is impor-tant. Adequate diagnostic measures, including endometrial sampling when indicated should be underkalen to rule our talignary in all cases of undignosed persistents recurring adnormal againal bledning. There is no evidence that the use of natural setsor gene results in a all different educenterial responde to much the storagen of equila-ther risk of an additional setsor and the storagen of equilations the risk of another taken the storagen of equilations of the storagen of equilations the risk of another taken the storagen of equilations of the storagen of equilations the risk of another taken the storagen of equilations of the storagen of equilations in the storagen of equilations of the storagen of equilations of the storagen of equilations the risk of another taken the storagen of equilations of the storagen of equilations the storagen of the storagen of equilations of the storagen of equilations of the storagen of equilations the storagen of equilations of equilations of the storagen of the storagen of equilations of the storagen of the stora

The first denounced an systematic and the second se from observational studies are generally consistent with trial and report no significant variation in the risk of bre estrogens or progestins, doses, or routes of administrat

Berlex, Inc. Montville, NJ 07045

The CEMPA substudy of WHI reported an increased risk of herest caretor in women who took CEMPA for a mean follow-up of 5 syster. Observational studies have also propried an increased risk for estrogenship comparison combanitation through and a smaller increased risk for estrogen alone through, after several years of use. In the WHI till and from observational studies, the coses risk increased with duration of use several resources and the several years of use in the WHI till and from observational studies, the coses risk increased with duration of use several resources and the several resource in the several years of use. In the WHI till and from observational studies, the role coses risk increased with duration of use several resources and the several resource increase subsect that the role combination therapy as compared to estrogen alone therapy. In the CEMPA studies (25% of the versue reported prior use of strogen alone and estrogenty progettic combination hormone therapy. Patter a mean follow-up of 55 years during the dirical rule to eval relation exist of increase the strat cancer was 124 (5%) 10000 women-years, for CEMPA compared with placeton. Among women who report-er and the aboute risk was 46 vs.25 cases per 10.000 women-years, for CEMPA com-pared with placeton cancers was target and diagoned at an examical statem to again of the direct cancer was 10, 10, and the aboute risk or was 40 vs. 36 using, increase there are cancer was 10, 10, and the aboute risk or as who are advanced stage the CEMPA group compared with the placeto group. Cherry progetor class such as increase to target and hormone therapy. Tetration the resource advanced stage the toge study, expared there bekeen the two groups. The expective that an increase to baget and therease bekeen the two groups. There advanced target to use a set strogen programs the set in the placeto barrow that an increase to baget and therease bekeen the two groups. There advanced target to use de strogene balance to target barrow that troogic sudope, grade ann formione receptor status au not arter detween the groups. The use of estroopen plus progestin has been reported to result in an increase in abnormal mammograms requiring further evaluation. All women should receive evanithments and the status of the status of the status of the status of the examinations. In addition, mammography examinations should be scheduled based on patient age, risk tactors, and prior mammogram results.

Dementia In the Women's Health Initiative Memory Study (WHIMS), 4,532 generally hea nostmenopausal women 65 years of age and older were studied, of whom 3 In the Winners Health Initiative Memory Study (WHINS) 4.532 generally Inatility postmenopsaula women 56 years of age and older were studied, of whom 35% were 70 to 74 years of age and 18% were 75 or older. After an average follow-up of 4 years, 40 women being treated with CEMPA (18%, m-c223) and 21 women in the placebo group (0.9%, m-c230) received diagnoses of probable dementia. The relative risk for CEMPA versus placebo was 2.06 (5%) contidence interval 12.1 – 3.46), and was similar for women with and whithout histories of menopausal hommon use before WHINS. The about ensit of probable dementia for CEMPA versus placebo was 45 versus 22 cases per (10.00 women-years, and the aboute content links (middler was placebo versus of the content in CEMPA versus placebo was 45 versus 22 cases per (10.00 women-years, and the aboute content links (middler was placebo versus of the content in CEMPA versus placebo versus 45 versus 22 cases per (10.00 women-years, and the aboute the content links (middler was placebo versus of the content in CEMPA Placebo versus 45 versus 22 cases per (10.00 women-years, and the aboute the content links (middler was placebo versus). The content is content women women in the placebo versus of the content in the complex placebo versus 45 versus 22 cases per (10.00 women-years, and the aboute the content links (middler was placebo versus). The content is the complex placebo versus (10.00 km/s) (

Printmuscular is unknown whether these findings apply to essrugers
is unknown whether these findings apply to essrugers
Estillated defease
a to 4-doi functionale in the risk of galibladder disease requiring surgery in postmenously women receiving estrogers has been reported.

Hypercalcemia Estrogen administration may lead to severe hypercalcemia in patients with breast cancer and bone metastases. If hypercalcemia occurs, use of the drug should be stopped and appropriate measures taken to reduce the serum calcium level.

Stopport and appropriate integrates taken to records an event reaction even. Visual **abornatilitie** Retinal vascular thrombosis has been reported in patients receiving estrogens Discontinue metaciation pending examination if there is sudden partial or complete loss of vision, or a sudden onset of proptosis, diplopia, or migraine. It examination reveals papilleetma or retinal vascular lesions, estropers should be discontinued. PRECAUTIONS

Itilion of a progestim when a woman has not had a hysterectomy. dies of the addition of a progestim for 10 or more days of a cycle of estre institution, or daily with estrogen in a continuous regiment, have reported a incidence of endometrial hyperplacia than would be induced by estrogen to a dome. Endometrial hyperplacia may be a precursor to endometrial cancer.

There are, however, possible risks that may be associated with the use of progesting with estrogens compared to estrogen-alone regimens. These include a possible increased risk of breast cancer.

Influences in the unstant of the second pressure have been Elevated block pressure reports, substantial increases in blood pressure have been attributed to lidiospincatic reactions to estrogens. In a large, randomized, placobo-controlled clinical risk, a generalized effect of setrogen therapy on blood pressure was not seen. Blood pressure should be monitored at regular intervals with estrogen use.

Influence to another and the appendix of the monitored at regular intervals with estrugent was not seen. Blood pressure should be monitored at regular intervals with service providence in patients with samilar decised of lipoprotein metabolism, oral estrogen therapy may be associated with elevations of plasma trighcendes leading to pancreating and the reventications.

unter scorpolaziones, Impariadi herr hannon and passi history of cholestatifi jamaine di en function. For patients with a history of cholestatic jamaine di eur function. For patients with a history of cholestatic jamaine associated with tase settoropen usor with program, caution should be excised and in the case of recurrence, medica-tion should be decombined.

tion should be unscientime. **Hypothyroidian Hypothyroidian Hypothyroidian**

Offer to humanism uner the Utyrus institute terris in an exception range. Fullia relation Because setrogens may cause some degree of fluid retention, patients with condi-tions that might be influenced by this factor, such as a cardiac or renal dysfunction, warrant careful observation when estrogens are prescribed.

Hypocalcemia Estrogens should be used with caution in individuals with severe hypocalcemia.

Encompts should be used with cattion in individuals with severe hypocationant. I Oursing name The CEMPA sub-study of Will reported that estrogen plus progestin increased the risk of ovarian cancer. After an average follow-up of 52 west, the relative risk for 0.77.7 a Quest, the relative plus of the severe state of the severe state of the 0.77.7 a Quest, the relative state of the severe state of the severe of the severe state of the severe state of the severe state of the plus of the severe state of the plus of the severe state of the severe state of the severe state of the severe severe state of the network of the severe state of the severe state of the severe state of the network of the severe state of the severe state of the severe state of the network of the severe state severe states the severe state severe state severe states the severe state severe states the severe state severe states the severe states and the severe

be encounteness posertysete exolution of program should be considered and a second state of the second

PATIENT INFORMATION ans are advised to discuss the PATIENT INFORMATION leaflet with patients in they prescribe Menostar™

C. LABORATORY TESTS

LABURATURY TESTS Estrogen administration should be initiated at the lowest dose approved for the indi-cation and then quided by clinical response rather than by serum hormone levels (e.g. estration), FSH).

ation and there quicke by clinical response rather than by serum hormone levels Co-colorated ground him has, partit the troobpolant in max and paldet aggrega-tion time, increased patient court; increased factors II. VII andgen, VIII caquitat activity, R.X. XII. VII-X complex, II-VII-X complex, and beta-thromboglobulin; decreased levels of antifactor Xa and antitrombin III, decreased antitromini III adv/ty, increased levels of througe and fibringous increased thyroid-hinding globulin (TBG) levels leading to increased circulating increased thyroid-hinding globulin (TBG) levels leading to increased circulating india thyroid hormone levels as macarused vector Bitching and fibringous references of thyroid-hinding globulin (TBG) levels leading to increased circulating references of thyroid-hormone fibring globulin (SHB) levels leading to increased circulating references of thyroid-hormone fibring globulin (SHB) levels leading to increased circulating references of thyroid-hormone fibring globulin (SHB) levels leading to increased circulating references of thyroid-hormone levels (SHC) in the second binding globulin (SHB) second levels (SHB) levels leading to increased circulating references of thyroid-hormone. Jone SHB (SHB) levels leading to increased circulating references of thyroid-hormone levels (SHB) levels leading to increased resulting levels references of thyroid-hormone. Jone SHB (SHB) levels leading to increased resulting the second levels Jone SHB (SHB) levels leading to increased resulting the second levels Jone SHB (SHB) levels leading to increased levels levels levels references of thyroid-hormone levels levels (SHB) levels leading to increased levels levels levels levels references levels references and levels references levels refer

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nounced a policy allowing federal funding for human embryonic stem cell research but only on a limited number of stem cell lines that were derived before Aug. 9, 2001. "Stem cell policy in 2005 should not

with a nonhuman molecule that compro-

mises their potential use in humans, ac-

cording to a new study from researchers

at the University of California, San Diego,

and the Salk Institute in La Jolla, Calif. The

study was published in the online Jan. 23

issue of the journal Nature Medicine. Sup-

porters of expanding the federal policy on

stem cell research touted the research as

evidence that the current policy isn't work-

ing. In August 2001, President Bush an-

corticosteroids and sex steroids, respectively. Free hormone concentrations may be decreased. Other plasma proteins may be increased (angiotensinopentrem substrate, alpha-tamitypisni cerulopelamin). 4. Increased plasma HOL and HOL subtraction concentrations, reduced LD cho-leateror concentrations, and no all consultations increased thylycende levels. 5. Biological propose to many grane text. Concentre contentions: administration in creased there is a sub-constraint continuous administration of estrogen, with and without progestin, in women with and without a deurs, has allow nan increased and is denoted that can be administration of estrogen, with and without progestin, in women with and without a deurs, has allow nan increased and is denoted that can be administration of estrogen with and without progestin, in women with and without a deurs, has allow nan increased and is denoted that can be administration of estrogen with and without progestin, in women with and without a deurs, has allow nan increased and is denoted that can be administration of estrogen with and without progestin.

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Long-term continuous administration of estrogen, with and without progestin, in women with and without a uterus, has shown an increased risk of endometrial can-cer, treast cancer, and varian cancer. (See BOXED WARNINGS, WARNINGS and PRECAUTIONS.)

Long-term continuous administration of natural and synthetic estrogens in certain animal species increases the frequency of carcinomas of the breast, uterus, cervix, vaqina, testis, and liver. PREGNANCY MenostarTM should not be used during pregnancy. (See CONTRAINDICATIONS.)

NUBSING MOTHERS

NURSING MOTHERS Estrogen administration to nursing mothers has been shown to decrease the quan-tity and quality of the milk. Detectable amounts of estrogens have been identified in the milk of mothers receiving this drug. Caution should be exercised when Menostar^W is administered to a nursing woman.

Pediatric Use The safety and efficacy of Menostar[™] in pediatric patients has not been established

Geriatric Use A total of 417 postmenopausal women 61-79 years old, with an intact uterus, par-ticipated in the costeoprosis trail. More than 50% of women receiving study drug, were considered geriatric (65 years) or older). Efficacy in older, 26 Sayas) and younger (<65 years) postmenopausal women in the osteopcrosis traatiment trail was comparable total at 2 and 24 months. Safety in older (<65 years) postmenopausal (<65 years) postmenopausal women in the osteopcrosis traatiment that was also comparable. Total at women in the osteopcrosis traatiment that was also

comparable throughout the study. In the Women's Health Initiative Memory Study, Including 4,532 women 65 years of age and odies, followed for an average of 4 years, 82%, (n=3,279) were 65 to 74 while 15% (n=630) were 75 and over. Mick studence (80%) had no prior hormore herzay use. Women treated with conjugated estrogers plus medicoxynogistrome a cattle were reported to have a two-fold increase in the risk of developing protable dementa ta. Arbinen's disease was the most common classification of probable dementa in both the conjugated terograpers plus methorsynogistrom actuate group and the placebo group. Minety percent of the cases of probable dementa in the 54% of women that were defined the targer of plus methods the menta in the state of the targer of the Methods. Dementa in the 54% of women that were defined that the cases of probable dementa in the 54% of women that were defined that the cases of probable dementa in the 54% of women that were the targer of targer of the targer of targer own whether these findings apply to estrogen alone therapy

ADVERSE REACTIONS See BOXED WARNINGS, WARNINGS and PRECAUTIONS.

Because clinical trials are conducted under videly varying contilions, adverse reaction rates observed in the clinical trials of a drug cannot be directly compared to rates in the clinical trials of another drug and may not reflect the rates observed in practice. The adverse reaction information from clinical trials does, however, provide a basis for ident-trying the adverse reverts that appear to be reliable to drug use and for approximating rates.

AE per Body System	Menostar [™] 14 mcg/day	Placebo
	(N=208)	(N=209)
Body as a Whole	95 (46%)	100 (48%
Ábdominal Pain	17 (8%)	17 (8%)
Accidental Injury	29 (14%)	23 (119
Infection	11 (5%)	10 (5%
Pain	26 (13%)	26 (12%
Cardiovascular	20 (10%)	19 (9%
Digestive System	52 (25%)	44 (219
Constipation	11 (5%)	6 (3%
Dyspepsia	11 (5%)	9 (4%
Metabolic and Nutritional Disorders	25 (12%)	22 (119
Musculoskeletal System	54 (26%)	51 (24%
Arthralgia	24 (12%)	13 (6%
Artnritis	11 (5%)	15 (7%
Myaigia	10 (5%)	6 (3%
Nervous System	30 (14%)	23 (119
Dizziness	11 (5%)	6 (3%)
Respiratory System	62 (30%)	67 (32%
Bronchitis	12 (6%)	9 (4%
Upper Respiratory Intection	33 (16%)	35 (17%
Skin and Appendages	50 (24%)	54 (26%
Application Site Reaction	18 (9%)	18 (9%
Biedst Falli	10 (3%)	0 (4 %
Urogenital System	66 (32%)	40 (19%
Leukerrhee	13 (0%)	4 (2%)

In one with aduational adverse reactions have been reported with earlying Changes in vaginal bleeding pattern and abnormal withdrawal bleedi breakthrough bleeding, sporting, dysmenorrhea, increase in size of uter omata' vagnitis, including vaginal candidiasis; change in amount of cer tion; changes in cervical ectropion; ovarian cancer; endometrial endometrial cancer.

Breasts Tenderness, enlargement, pain, nipple discharge, galactorrhea; fibrocystic breas changes; breast cancer.

anges, preast cancer. diovascular ep and superficial venous thrombosis; pulmonary embolism; thrombophlebitis rocardial infarction; stroke; increase in blood pressure.

Nausea, vomiting; abdominal cramps, bloating; cholestatic jaundice; increased inci-dence of gall bladder disease; pancreatitis; enlargement of hepatic hemangiomas. ana or melasma, which may persist when drug is discontinued; erythema mul-e: erythema_nodosum; hemorrhaoic eruption; loss of scalo hair; hirsutism

Eyes Retinal vascular thrombosis; intolerance to contact lenses

Central neurous system Headache; migraine; dizziness; mental depression; chorea; nervousness; mood dis-turbances; irritability; exacerbation of epilepsy; dementia.

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OVERDOSAGE

ERDOSAGE erdosage of estrogen may cause nausea, and withdrawal bleeding may occur in nales. Serious III effects have not been reported following acute ingestion of large ses of estrogen-containing drug products by young children. HOW SUPPLIED

Menostar™ (estradiol transdermal system), 14 mcg/day — each 3.25 cm² system col tains 1 mg of estradiol USP

Made

NDC 50419-455-04 Individual Carton of 4 systems Shelf Pack Carton of 6 Individual Cartons of 4 systems e above 86°F (30°C). Do not store unpouched. Apply immediately upo

removal from the protective pouch.	
Made In USA	
Manufactured for:	Manufactured by:
BERLEX [®]	3M Pharmaceuticals
Berlex, Montville, NJ 07045	St. Paul, MN 55144
6006000-630400	June 2004
05-240-0207	Printed in USA/January 2005

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be based on 2001 policy," Rep. Mike Castle (R-Del.), said in a statement. "An expansion of this policy is critical to our scientists and researchers who need access to the best stem cell lines available and who want the important ethical guidance of the National Institutes of Health." Rep. Castle, along with Rep. Diana DeGette (D., Colo.), has been pushing for an easing of the 2001 federal policy.

The State of Cervical Cancer

Most U.S. states are falling behind when it comes to cervical cancer screening rates, coverage of routine screening tests in public insurance programs, and legislation on cervical cancer, according to a new report from Women in Government. In the bestperforming states, at least 80% of women in the appropriate age range have been screened in the last 3 years, and Medicaid programs cover both Pap testing and HPV tests in routine screening of women aged 30 and older. However, while 46 states and the District of Columbia cover HPV testing through Medicaid when medically necessary, many physicians are not routinely offering it, said J. Thomas Cox, M.D., director of the Women's Clinic at the University of California, Santa Barbara. "Therefore, it is imperative to inform doctors and women about HPV, and to ensure access to HPV testing and to the vaccine for HPV when it become available," he said in a statement. A copy of the report is available online at www. womeningovernment.org.

Women of childbearing age with a fami-

ly history that puts their potential children

at high risk for neural tube defects should supplement their diets with 4 mg of folic

acid each day, according to the U.S. Sur-

geon General. But the increased folic acid should be taken through folic acid supplements, not by increasing the number of

multivitamins, the Surgeon General said,

because of the risk of vitamin A poison-

ing. The Surgeon General made these rec-

ommendations while announcing his

agenda for 2005. Women of childbearing

age without family history of neural tube defects should supplement their diets with 400 mcg of folic acid each day, said Sur-

geon General Richard H. Carmona, M.D.

ments by 2.7% in 2006 to keep pace with the

cost of providing care, the Medicare Pay-

ment Advisory Commission recommend-

ed. Such an increase will help physicians

continue to treat Medicare patients, John

Nelson, M.D., president of the American Medical Association, said in a statement.

"Unless Medicare payments keep up with

the cost of providing care, there is a real

concern that some physicians will be forced to stop taking new Medicare patients," he

said. However, unless Congress fixes a flaw

in Medicare's physician payment formula, doctors face a 5% cut next year and cumu-

lative cuts of 30% through 2012. Several

MedPAC commissioners supported the idea of taking outpatient or Part B drugs from

the formula, although the Government Ac-

countability Office has warned that this so-

lution would not prevent several years of de-

-Mary Ellen Schneider

clines in physician payments.

MedPAC: Give Doctors a 2% Hike Medicare should increase physician pay-

Focus on Folic Acid