

## Confusion between Reminyl and Amaryl leads to AEs

Janssen Pharmaceutica Products has issued a 'Dear Healthcare Professional' letter<sup>1</sup> and a 'Dear Pharmacist' letter<sup>2</sup> advising of reports of medication errors involving confusion between Reminyl [galantamine] and Amaryl [glimepiride].

These reports include instances where patients received Amaryl, indicated for type 2 diabetes mellitus, in place of Reminyl, indicated for mild-to-moderate Alzheimer's-type dementia, and involved various adverse events (AEs), including severe hypoglycaemia and one case of death.<sup>1</sup> These errors appear to have arisen from prescriptions that have been written, interpreted, labelled and/or filled incorrectly due to the similarity in the names of these agents.

In the letter to pharmacists, the company offers the following suggestions:

- place Amaryl and Reminyl apart from each other on the shelf
- confirm the brand name prescribed on written and oral prescriptions
- counsel patients about the brand name, indication and proper use of each medication.<sup>2</sup>

1. US Food and Drug Administration. 2004 Safety alert: Reminyl (galantamine hydrobromide). Internet Document : [3 pages], 28 Oct 2004. Available from: URL: <http://www.fda.gov>.

2. Janssen Pharmaceutica Inc. Important safety alert regarding medical errors involving confusion between REMINYL (Rm) (galantamine hydrobromide). Internet Document : [2 pages], 19 Oct 2004. Available from: URL: <http://www.us.janssen.com>.