



# Med-E.R.R.S.<sup>®</sup>

## Medical Error Recognition & Revision Strategies

### ▼ The Issue **Same Trademark, Different Drug**

- Pharmaceutical trademarks used in one country for a product may represent a different active ingredient in another country.
- A US patient taking DILACOR (diltiazem) had the prescription refilled while traveling in Serbia. DILACOR in Serbia is digoxin, and the patient experienced life-

threatening cardiac problems.

- This information was initially published by the Institute for Safe Medication Practices <http://www.ismp.org/Newsletters/acutecare/articles/20050127.asp>.
- This issue is so widespread and potentially dangerous, that the FDA issued a public health

advisory in January 2006 describing 18 exact trademarks and 105 similar trademarks

<http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/reports/confusingnames.html>.

- This issue was also brought to light in a *Wall Street Journal* article August 16, 2005.

### Examples of same drug trademarks with different ingredients in the US and Europe

Trademark	Active ingredient(s), purpose, and manufacturer in US	Active ingredient(s), country, purpose, and manufacturer in Europe
DILACOR	diltiazem angina, hypertension (Watson Labs)	digoxin (Serbia) congestive heart failure, arrhythmia (Zdravlje)
FLOMAX	tamsulosin benign prostatic hyperplasia (Boehringer Ingelheim)	morniflumate (Italy) inflammation, pain, fever (Chiesi)
NORPRAMIN	desipramine depression (Aventis)	omeprazole (Spain) peptic ulcer, GERD (CEPA)
SOMINEX	diphenhydramine insomnia (GlaxoSmithKline Consumer)	promethazine (United Kingdom) insomnia (Thornton & Ross)
TREXAN	naltrexone opioid dependence (DuPont)	methotrexate (Finland, Hungary) malignant neoplasm, psoriasis, rheumatoid arthritis (Orion)
VIVELLE	estradiol estrogen deficiency, menopausal disorders, osteoporosis (Novartis)	ethinyl estradiol, norgestimate (Austria) acne, tri-phasic oral contraceptive (Janssen-Cilag)

Used with permission. *ISMP Medication Safety Alert!* January 27, 2005

### ▼ Awareness

- **Issue:** no international regulatory system exists to ensure that new trademarks are sufficiently different from those existing elsewhere in the world
- **Patient Safety Risk:** avoidable adverse drug events arising from overseas travel, drug importation and Internet prescription purchasing
- **Trademark Risk:** potential misuse of your trademark and its good will in other countries
- **Prevention:** Med-E.R.R.S. provides trademark safety testing and screening that can help you avoid duplicate use of drug trademarks you are filing and managing

### ▼ About Med-E.R.R.S.

Med-E.R.R.S.<sup>®</sup> is an independent organization that works with pharmaceutical and healthcare industry professionals who specialize in trademark development, trademark law, regulatory affairs and drug safety. Our expertise is in evaluating trademarks for safety during the pre-market phase, for the purpose of reducing the risk of medication errors. We accomplish this by assessing the potential for look-alike and sound-alike confusability of trademark candidates with other drug products, medical terms and abbreviations encountered in the healthcare setting.



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