

Date: November 15, 2007

Subject: DRC Recommendations to DCC and DHS

To: DHS, DCC, Dean's Office

From: Henry F. Simmons, Jr., MD, Ph.D.  
Chairman DRC

At its 11/15/07 meeting, the Drug Review Committee considered the potential toxicity and therapeutic roles of selected antihistamines in children and adults with seasonal allergic rhinitis [SAR], perennial allergic rhinitis [PAR] and chronic idiopathic urticaria [CIU].

The medications discussed included the following:

Cetirizine [Zyrtec]  
Desloratidine [Clarinex]  
Fexofenadine [Allegra]  
Loratidine [Claritin]

Based upon the bulk of the best available evidence pertaining to the aforementioned drugs the Committee concluded the following:

1. None of the four drugs presents a special risk relative to the others.
2. Cetirizine, desloratidine, loratidine and fexofenadine do not differ in efficacy for treatment of SAR, PAR and CIU in adults and children to the degree that one should be preferred over another.
3. Aside from pregnant patients for whom either cetirizine or loratidine should be available, none of the drugs offers a special benefit to other subgroups in either improving total symptom scores or reducing adverse effects.

Henry F. Simmons, Jr.  
Chairman, DRC