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Lilly Announces Individual Bar Coding on All Insulin Vials

Industry believes bar codes may reduce risk of medication errors in hospital settings

INDIANAPOLIS, Feb 07, 2005 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- As part of its long- standing commitment to patient safety, Eli Lilly and Company (NYSE: LLY) has announced that it is including bar codes on individual vials of its insulin products including Humulin(R) and Humalog(R).

The bar codes -- much like the linear bar codes found on many retail products -- have been included on Lilly's insulin product outer packaging in the past, but this marks the first time the bar codes are being included on the vial labels.

The bar coding is part of a larger effort within the health care industry to decrease medication errors. In February 2004, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a new regulation that requires all new pharmaceuticals to be bar coded upon launch in the marketplace and all existing medications be bar coded within two years of the ruling. Lilly completed its bar coding of insulin vials 18 months before the FDA's deadline, and the bar codes appear on vials for nine insulin products.

Bar code labeling on prescription drugs is projected to reduce error by 500,000 instances over the next 20 years with an estimated savings of \$93 billion in additional health care costs, patient pain and suffering and lost wages, according to the FDA. Studies by U.S. Pharmacopeia in 2003 indicate insulin products have the highest rates of errors in a hospital setting.

"Insulin is a life-saving medication for so many patients, so it's disheartening to see that it can be involved in errors," said Scott J. Jacober, DO, medical advisor at Lilly. "Much of this can be attributed to the high volume of insulin used in a hospital setting and the complexity of hospital medication orders for insulin. With the new bar coded vials, doctors can have greater confidence that the drug they are prescribing is being given to the correct patient and at the correct time."

Individual insulin patients and pharmacists may notice the bar coding, too. However, the initiative will have the biggest immediate impact on hospitals.

"With insulin, the vials are often removed from outer packaging. Bar coding the vial itself is so integral to enhancing safety in our hospitals," said Michael R. Cohen, RPh, MS, ScD, president of the Institute for Safe Medication Practices and author of the book Medication Errors. Cohen is also a member of the FDA's Drug Safety and Risk Management Advisory Panel and was involved in the creation of this new regulation. "As more hospitals embrace technology that allows for 100 percent digital patient medical records, we're seeing bedside bar code scanners in patient rooms and correlating bar codes on patient identification bracelets. Doctors designate the proper medication, dosage, time to administer, and so on for their patients. Then when a nurse administering medication scans the patient's bracelet and vial, all data can be verified before any drug is administered."

Product and National Drug Code (NDC) Numbers Affected

Product	Vial Strength & Size	NDC Number
Humalog	100 Units/mL, 10mL	0002-7510-01 (insulin lispro injection [rDNA origin])
Humalog Mix75/25	100 Units/mL, 10mL	0002-7511-01 (75% insulin lispro protamine suspension, 25% insulin lispro injection [rDNA origin])
Humulin R	100 Units/mL, 10mL	0002-8215-01
Humulin N	100 Units/mL, 10mL	0002-8315-01
Humulin 70/30	100 Units/mL, 10mL	0002-8715-01
Humulin 50/50	100 Units/mL, 10mL	0002-9515-01
Humulin L	100 Units/mL, 10mL	0002-8415-01
Humulin U	100 Units/mL, 10mL	0002-8615-01
Humulin R	500 Units/mL, 20mL	0002-8501-01

Important Safety Information

Potential side effects associated with the use of all insulins include low blood sugar, weight gain, low blood potassium, changes in fat tissue at the site of injection, and allergic reactions, both general and local. Starting or changing insulin therapy should be done cautiously and only under medical supervision.

Lilly's Leadership in Diabetes:

Through a long-standing commitment to diabetes care, Lilly provides patients with breakthrough treatments that enable them to live longer, healthier and fuller lives. Since 1923, Lilly has been the industry leader in pioneering therapies to help health care professionals improve the lives of people with diabetes, and research continues on innovative medicines to address the unmet needs of patients. For more information about Lilly's current diabetes products visit www.lillydiabetes.com.

About Lilly:

Lilly, a leading innovation-driven corporation, is developing a growing portfolio of first-in-class and best-in-class pharmaceutical products by applying the latest research from its own worldwide laboratories and from collaborations with eminent scientific organizations. Headquartered in Indianapolis, Ind., Lilly provides answers -- through medicines and information -- for some of the world's most urgent medical needs. Additional information about Lilly is available at www.lilly.com. P-LLY

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