



MEDICAL ENTOMOLOGY CENTRE

Insect Research & Development Ltd

Winter 2005

DEVELOPMENTS : New moves in treating lice

Fighting head lice is like a game of chess. As soon as you make a potentially winning move the lice manage to counter it!

Over the past 20 years there have been several innovations in producing consumer friendly medicines . But it seems impossible to make one that avoids the difficulties of applying the products, especially when treating long and thick hair. As a result some lice have survived and gone on to acquire resistance to the insecticides, which makes the whole process harder for everyone else.



The hunt is on for new treatments that kill lice and their eggs and there are several contenders in the pipeline.

Medicines or devices? If new products have a physical action, what should be their regulatory status ?

The answer must be to make them medicines for two reasons:

1. A licensed medicine carries with it the confidence that it has been fully evaluated for safety and efficacy.
2. Regardless of recent trends for internet selling of fringe products and registering innovative ideas as medical devices it is clear that for market share and real turnover the licensed route is the one to follow.

Making the move to take a good idea through to registration is potentially a daunting task for small companies but, with head lice levels higher than at any time since the 1950's, now is the time. Insect R&D Limited is the only organization that can perform both *in vitro* screening of potential new actives and formulations and then progress on to Phase II and Phase III clinical trials. With the help of consultants in formulation development and project management we can help you take a product through to the regulatory stages, and then provide professional support during launch and marketing.

Insect Diary

• October/November

Scabies infections, picked up when children return to school, start to show symptoms. Day centres and care homes will also experience more cases with the change of season.

“A licensed medicine carries with it the confidence that it has been fully evaluated for safety and efficacy”

Study Days and Courses 2006

info@insectresearch.com

Lice

- Tuesday 14 th February
- Wednesday 5th July
- Wednesday 8th November

Scabies

- Wednesday 15 th February
- Thursday 6th July
- Thursday 9th November

Medical Entomology Centre

Cambridge House
Barrington Road
Shepreth
Royston

Phone: +44 1763 263011
Fax: +44 1763 263022

Email: info@insectresearch.com

Ticks and Lyme borreliosis

Spring and early summer 2005 were unusual for the mild and damp weather, making it a good year for ticks. A recent **Insect R&D** press release triggered national media coverage and also the interest of several groups and individuals with keen to highlight the risks associated with tick bites. When demonstrating tick dragging for the **BBC Look East** broadcast on 26th May 2005 we found ticks within a few metres of a popular picnic spot, illustrating the risk that children could easily pick up ticks while enjoying playing in the countryside and so possibly develop Lyme disease.

The real question is what proportion of ticks are infected with *Borrelia*?

A serious point to come out of this is, that many people with Lyme disease like symptoms, believe they are not being diagnosed correctly because of a failure to check for a wide enough range of serotypes in the UK. Could we be underestimating the extent of the problem? More information on this is available from <http://www.bada-uk.org>



WHAT'S FOR DINNER ?

What makes newspapers good copy and great headlines? No, it's not cute and cuddly although it may well appear on page three, but something that almost all of us will have taken home unwittingly at some time along with the weekly shop. Guessed it? A foreign body in our food.

Toad in lettuce...Pig's eyelashes in pork scratchings.....Snake Bone in peanuts.....the words leap out of the page. The subject may even have leapt out of the package! However, what readers may find funny, the food industry finds a real nightmare.

Insect R&D, formerly the Medical Entomology Centre, Cambridge, has been helping food suppliers worldwide for the last 20 years to identify mystery objects that crop up in produce, often after irate customers have returned to the shop with 'something in a jar'.

Director, Ian Burgess says: "Over the years we have had to identify some very strange foreign bodies, often from only tiny fragments where something like a cockroach has been cooked along with the crisps. It's challenging work and tests your powers of observation.

"We have a wide range of clients, many from among the giant supermarket chains, although we are just as likely to receive a specimen from a corner shop. Realistically, it would be impossible for the industry to be completely protect against contamination. It's a question of making certain the specimen and the source are identified correctly, to ensure against further problems and eliminate any fraudulent claim that would cost the supplier dear."

info@insectresearch.com

www.insectresearch.com

Ian Burgess, Elizabeth Kidman, and Christine Brown have recently recorded interviews for the Human Hosts series on Radio 4 about bed bugs, head lice, fleas, and the scabies mite these programmes can be listened to on-line at www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/humanhosts/

Toby Wilkinson is currently recording a Channel Four dispatches documentary on Asthma focusing on the house dust mite to be aired on the 12th March 2006.