

Pharmacist's registration permanently cancelled

Nizarali Dodhia defrauded PharmaCare; second offense

In November 2005 Nizarali Kanji Dodhia pleaded guilty in B.C. Supreme Court to charges of fraud over \$5,000 contrary to section 380(1)(a) of the Criminal Code, and was sentenced in April 2006 to a two-year prison term. On January 4, 2007, a discipline panel of the College of Pharmacists of B.C. held a hearing to determine the college's response to Mr. Dodhia's guilty plea and conviction.

The discipline panel reviewed the circumstances behind the criminal case, and Mr. Dodhia's history with the CPBC.

The November 2005 guilty plea stemmed from Mr. Dodhia's activities between January 2000 and May 2002. While working as a practicing Vancouver pharmacist, Mr. Dodhia issued fraudulent claims to the province's PharmaCare program for services ostensibly rendered to three patients in relation to the provision of diabetes test strips. The patients did not receive the diabetes supplies,

but Mr. Dodhia billed PharmaCare for \$77,209 for the purported service.

This was not the first time Mr. Dodhia acted in contravention of the Criminal Code or the Pharmacists, Pharmacy Operations and Drug Scheduling Act. In 1998 he was convicted for trafficking a narcotic and unlawfully selling a drug. For this Mr. Dodhia paid a \$35,000 fine to the courts and was suspended from the CPBC registry for one year.

The discipline panel considered this past conviction in reaching its decision. Also taken into consideration were: letters of support from family members; his repayment of the money defrauded from PharmaCare; his guilty plea, which made a court trial unnecessary; and his resignation from the college.

The discipline panel was held pursuant to sections 54 and 58 of the Pharmacists, Pharmacy Operations and Drug Scheduling Act, which deal with discipline and the consequences of conviction for an offense relating to the practice of pharmacy and indictable offenses.

After assessing the case, the discipline panel reached its decision on January 31, 2007; Mr. Dodhia and his legal council declined an invitation to attend.

The panel decided to permanently cancel Mr. Dodhia's CPBC registration, based on his:

- prior trafficking and unlawful drug sales conviction;
- discipline record with the college due to the above conviction and subsequent one-year suspension; and
- recent conviction, again related to professional practice, of fraud over \$5,000.

The panel noted, "After considering all of the circumstances, there can be no doubt that Mr. Dodhia's most recent actions show a serious and flagrant disregard for not only the standards of pharmacy practice but the criminal law. Unfortunately, it appears clear that Mr. Dodhia has not learned from his mistakes."

Nizarali Dodhia has been removed from the CPBC registry.

Corn-related allergens

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What you can do

Pharmacists are requested to use caution and be aware that many drugs and medications contain undisclosed potential allergens in the form of sugars, starches, and celluloses.

Share the corn allergy example with prescribers, so they are aware of potential allergic reactions patients may face. This relatively unknown but potentially serious allergy highlights the need for pharmacists and other health-care professionals to be involved in ADR reporting.

At the end of this article, you'll find the URL for Health Canada's adverse drug reaction reporting form. Add it to the favourites list on your browser, and make it part of your pharmacy's ADR reporting process. Also listed is a website for potential corn-based allergens. Share both websites with your patients, so they can play an

active role in reporting adverse drug reactions and be aware of allergy-related NMIs and food products.

Survey – reply and win!

Express your interest in better NMI standards by taking a few minutes to fill out the corn allergy awareness survey inserted in this issue of *ReadLinks*. Not only can you win great prizes, but you will further the college's communication with Health Canada on this topic: a survey-response summary will be forwarded to Health Canada to help advance the message that pharmacists want to know more about potentially harmful NMIs.



www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/alt_formats/hpfb-dgpsa/pdf/medeff/ar-ei_form_e.pdf

www.cornallergens.com

POSSIBLE CORN-BASED NMIs

A quick look at a few product monographs in the *CPS* reveals the following NMIs that could be derived from corn:

- carboxymethyl cellulose
- cellulosic microcrystalline
- citric acid
- crosscarmellose
- caramel
- dextrose
- ethylcellulose
- fructose
- hydroxypropyl methylcellulose
- hypromellose
- lactic acid
- lethicin
- MSG
- propylene glycol
- sorbic acid.

See "ADR reporting increases" page 6.