Pharmacy Technician Review: Nonprescription
Analgesics for Headache and Common Conditions Causing Pain

Posttest/Rationale

1. With regard to causes of headache and the most appropriate course of action to take, which of the following requires a medical referral?
   A. A patient who says her headache was preceded by flashes of light
   B. A patient whose headache also causes drooping of the eyelid on the same side as the pain
   C. A patient whose headache is due to final exams
   D. A patient who hit his head falling on the ice***

Correct Answer: D
The patient with headache following a blow to the head may have a postconcussive headache. Any headache with this history requires referral.

2. Which of following is a “red flag” or alarm situation requiring immediate physician referral in a patient who presents with a headache?
   A. The patient also has slurred speech***
   B. The patient also has a runny nose
   C. The patient is a smoker
   D. The patient also has a rash

Correct Answer: A
Slurred speech is one of the red flags that require an immediate referral to the physician in the patient with headache.

3. Which of the following types of headache is usually described as a throbbing, pounding pain that is worse on 1 side of the head that may have accompanying visual disturbances known as aura?
   A. Tension-type headache
   B. Migraine headache***
   C. Cluster headache
D. Chronic daily headache

Correct Answer: B
Patients with migraine often describe visual disturbances and pain that is throbbing or pounding, which is worse on 1 side of the head.

4. A patient is complaining of headache that feels as though someone is pushing a hot piece of steel through their eye. The pain is only on 1 side of the head. Which type of headache does the patient likely have?
   A. Tension-type headache
   B. Migraine headache
   C. Cluster headache***
   D. Chronic-daily headache

Correct Answer: C
Cluster headaches typically present with a sharp, burning pain on only 1 side of the head. It has been likened to someone pushing hot steel in their eye

5. The maximum recommended duration of nonphysician-supervised use of oral analgesics in the treatment of headache or pain is usually:
   A. 3 days
   B. 5 days
   C. 10 days***
   D. 14 days

Correct Answer: C
The recommended duration of nonphysician-supervised use of oral analgesics is 10 days

6. An older patient is ready to check out at the pharmacy counter. In addition to his sleep medication, he has a bottle of naproxen that he would like to purchase. What information might be useful when ascertaining his risk for possible stomach bleeds?
   A. Age
B. Medical history
C. Alcohol and nicotine consumption
D. All of the above***

Correct Answer: D
When screening patients, medical history, duration of illness, age, alcohol and nicotine consumption, as well as medication history are all important pieces of information

7. Which of the following is not an effective medication for pain related to inflammation?
A. Ibuprofen
B. Naproxen
C. Acetaminophen***
D. None of the above

Correct Answer: C
Acetaminophen does not have anti-inflammatory pharmacologic activity

8. Topical analgesics:
A. Are not recommended for continued use if symptoms persist beyond 7 days
B. Should not be applied more than 3 to 4 times daily
C. Should not be applied on mucous membranes
D. All of the above***

Correct Answer: D
Topical analgesics should not be used beyond 7 days if symptoms persist, they should not be used more than 3-4 times daily, and they should not be placed on open wounds or mucous membranes

9. Which topical therapeutic ingredient should not be recommended for use in a patient who has an aspirin allergy?
A. Methyl salicylate***
B. Lidocaine
C. Menthol
D. Camphor

Correct Answer: A
Patients with an aspirin allergy should not apply methyl salicylate

10. A patient has a habit of drinking 4 or more cans of beer every night. Which is the safest medication for him to use to relieve his muscle pain?
A. Advil
B. Bayer Aspirin
C. Tylenol
D. Flexall***

Correct Answer: D
No FDA-approved oral analgesic is safe for those who drink three or more alcoholic beverages daily. Topical analgesics such as Flexall do not carry this warning.