

## Indigenous urged responsibility

HEALTH Minister Nicola Roxon told a conference yesterday that indigenous people need to take more responsibility for their health by giving up smoking and reducing their drinking.

*The Australian* reported that Roxon's speech to the Fulbright Symposium in Adelaide outlined efforts to increase Aborigines' life expectancies between by lifting standards of health, education and economic development.

"Many of the risk factors associated with chronic diseases are behavioural," she said.

"It is ultimately up to individuals to modify their behaviour to reduce their exposure to illness.

"We will invest money in tackling smoking, but quitting is ultimately a choice made by the person.

"We will provide support for drug and alcohol services — but giving these things up or learning to handle alcohol responsibly is a challenge that must, in the final analysis, be met by the person in question."

## Ask Dr Deb

*PHARMACY Daily's 'Ask Dr Deb'* column will return in next Fri's issue; in the meantime if you have any curly travel health-related questions for her to answer email them to [askdrdeb@pharmacydaily.com.au](mailto:askdrdeb@pharmacydaily.com.au).

## Sixty Chemsave members

NSW-based pharmacy banner group Chemsave has just signed its 60th member, just two and a half years after launching.

Chemsave claims to be "Australia's best value pharmacy banner group," offering members a choice of membership levels "and by providing marketing that actually works and is relevant to the threats facing pharmacy today."

Founder Michael Dixon, who operates three pharmacies in Sydney's Wentworthville, told *PD* Chemsave is also expanding into

## Late flu hit possible

AN influenza expert has warned that the so-far light flu season may just be running late.

Influenza Specialist Group chairman Alan Hampson said 2008 had so far had a mild flu season, but he did not know "if it is a lighter year or just a later year," he told *The Daily Telegraph*.

Last year was one of the most severe flu seasons in Australia, with the deaths of six children and very high numbers of infections compared to the past decade.

There were 315 notifications in June 2007, rising to 2,474 in July and 5,238 in August.

This year, June had 234 cases, and July has had only 24 cases, according to Federal Health Department statistics.



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## DISPENSARY CORNER

VISITORS to an Indian restaurant in London should keep some Anusol on hand.

Vivek Singh, executive chef of the Cinnamon Club Restaurant on Great Smith St in Westminster, has created what he claims is the hottest curry in the world.

Dubbed the *Bollywood Burner* the dish contains the Dorset Naga, "a chilli that is 100 times hotter than a regular jalapeno."

In fact it's so hot that it comes with a health warning, with diners required to sign a disclaimer saying they are aware of the nature and risks involved with tasting the curry before eating it.

The spicy dish has been submitted for verification to the Guinness Book of Records.

THIS might help with weight loss motivation.

Scottish researchers have found that obese men have poorer quality sperm than those who weigh less.

Scientists at the University of Aberdeen postulated that losing weight would boost fertility, saying that possibly having too much fat around the testicles causes them to heat up and damage the sperm.

A CHINESE TV presenter has come up with a unique health promotion.

Ou Zhihang, who's one of the anchors at a Guangdong television station, has posted pictures of himself doing naked pushups at various Chinese landmarks - including the new 'Birds Nest' Olympic Stadium pictured below.

"I love my country, I also love my body. I contrast my tiny body with the 'miracle of the world' through the popular exercise - pushup," he said.



Queensland, ACT and other states and territories.

The entry 'buying' level costs \$295 per month and offers competitive wholesaler trading terms, discounts on prescription and OTC generics and trading terms with over 50 suppliers.

Level 2 offers 'buying and marketing' for \$495 per month, while the top level for \$695/month also includes full branding, fitout, uniforms and centralised reports.

## Black box for antibiotics

THE safety warnings on fluoroquinolones may be toughened up following the US Food and Drug Administration order to use "black box" cautions about the risk of tendon problems.

This class of antibiotics - sold as Noroxin, Ciproxin and Avelox and under generic brands in Australia - has been known to quadruple the risk of tendon ruptures and tendonitis, mostly in people over 60, those who have had certain organ transplants and those using steroid therapy.

A spokeswoman for the Therapeutic Goods Administration told AAP it was "reviewing this new information and will determine if the existing warnings should be strengthened."

Use of this drug class is generally more restrictive in Australia compared to other countries, and locally marketed products, such as Avelox and Ciproxin, already have warnings of tendon risk.

The FDA said several hundred cases of tendon-related problems had been reported in the US, with most involving the Achilles tendon.

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**RGH Pharmacy**  
**Anticoagulation Handbook**  
is now available to the  
pharmacy industry across Australia.

The handbook gives patients important information about warfarin treatment and has a chart to record INR results.

Repatriation General Hospital is making it available for purchase for \$2.80 per booklet, reduced to \$2.40 for PSA and SHPA members.

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