



The Canadian Adverse Reaction Newsletter— Keeping Health Professionals Informed

The *Canadian Adverse Reaction Newsletter (CARN)* features articles and data related to serious or unexpected adverse reactions that are suspected of being associated with prescription and non prescription medications, biologics, natural health products, radiopharmaceuticals and medical devices marketed in Canada.

Published by Health Canada, this quarterly newsletter keeps health professionals informed about health product safety issues – including potential ‘signals’ for adverse reactions *before* any comprehensive risk-benefit evaluations are completed or conclusions are reached about whether regulatory action is warranted. As such, the *CARN* provides the opportunity for health professionals to become aware of adverse reaction reports Health Canada receives, which depend to a very large extent on the quality of reporting they provide.

An **adverse reaction** is a harmful and unintended response to a health product.

A **signal** is considered the first indication of a product-related safety issue, and triggers the need to further investigate the association between the product and the adverse reaction.

CARN Objectives

The *CARN* serves mainly as an early-stage risk communication tool. The newsletter aims to:

- provide factual information in order to raise awareness of reported adverse reactions;
- communicate new health product safety information; and
- stimulate adverse reaction reporting and help change the current culture of under-reporting by health professionals.

CARN Readership

With a circulation of approximately 40,000, the newsletter’s target audiences include:

- health professionals such as pharmacists, physicians, naturopaths and nurses;
- market authorization holders (manufacturers and distributors); and
- other stakeholders, including drug information centres and health professional associations (both nationally and internationally).

Canadian consumers of health products may also benefit from the *CARN* because of its public availability on the MedEffect™ Canada Web site.

Comprehensive Coverage

Issues of the *CARN* provide readers with:

- **Data from adverse reaction reports** collected by Health Canada.
- **Articles and case presentations** focusing on specific health products, a specific reaction or a ‘system-organ class effect’ (such as cardiac adverse effects with a class of drugs). Case presentations are considered suspicions and are selected based on their timeliness, seriousness, frequency of occurrence or the unexpected nature of the reported reactions.
- A quarterly summary of health professional and public **advisories and recalls** available on the MedEffect™ Canada Web site.
- **Annual statistics on adverse reactions** reported to Health Canada, including the number, type and source of reports.

The *CARN* contains factual information derived from adverse reaction reports and refrains from providing medical recommendations which may interfere with individual health care. The *CARN* is not intended for regulatory decision-making actions concerning the safety of health products which are based on scientific analysis of case reports and other sources of scientific information.

Subscribing to the CARN

Subscription to the *CARN* can be done online at www.health.gc.ca/medeffect

The newsletter is distributed via e-mail. Printed copies can be obtained upon request.