

Patient Information

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Eczema and washing powders

Following publicity in the national press regarding the changed formula of Persil Automatic, many eczema sufferers have been concerned about which washing powder to use. The old formula Persil Automatic had been one of the few washing powders not to contain enzymes and bleaches. The National Eczema Society has been overwhelmed with enquiries on this topic and so has produced an information sheet which suggests some possible alternatives. The leaflet is entitled *New system (biological) Persil Automatic*.

The National Eczema Society has also recently produced an attractive and informative four page summary *Eczema: some hints and facts* (washing; treatments; clothing; bedding;

food; recovery) and a further leaflet *If your baby has eczema*.

Available free from: National Eczema Society, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9SR.

New asthma leaflets

Excellent new leaflets are available from the Asthma Society.

Asthma in pregnancy (£0.05) considers whether the severity of asthma will alter during pregnancy, whether asthma and the drugs used to treat it will affect the pregnancy and how to cope with labour and breastfeeding.

Will my child grow out of asthma? (£0.05) examines the effects of heredity, breastfeeding, infections and allergies on the asthmatic child and the possibilities for growing out of the condition.

Asthma at school (£0.10) is designed to inform teachers about the nature and treatment of asthma. A sympathetic understanding and handling of the child can go a long way towards alleviating anxiety and helping the child to cope normally with school life.

Other new leaflets available are *Exercise asthma* (£0.05); *Asthma and allergy* (£0.10) and *The asthmatic on holiday* (£0.15).

Available from: Asthma Society, St Thomas's Hospital, Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7EH.

About the driver and blind people

This new leaflet has been prepared to give the car driver advice on how to be most helpful to the blind pedestrian. The essential message is that most blind people are trained to listen and respond to normal traffic conditions. Unexpected behaviour by the driver (sudden braking, stopping when lights are in your favour, letting the blind person cross as though there were an invisible zebra crossing) is more likely to be dangerous than helpful. The leaflet has been prepared in co-operation with the Royal National Institute for the Blind and the advice is robust 'Don't flash your headlights!', 'Go away if your assistance is not needed'. Above all treat a blind person like an ordinary human being.

Available free from: Automobile Associa-

tion, Fanum House, Basingstoke RG21 2EA (AA Roadsense series PA9).

Caring for elderly people at home

The needs of family carers of elderly people have long been neglected. Carers are often ill-informed about the services available to help them; often they lack information on the nature of their dependant's illness or disability. Carers may feel trapped in their home with no-one to talk to about their worries and experiences. Often they feel unsupported, unrecognized and undervalued. The stress experienced by carers is all the greater when dealing with an elderly relative who has become mentally infirm. Now two updated directories of initiatives have been compiled by Chris Cloke of Age Concern (England) Information Department.

Caring for the carers: a directory of initiatives (£1.00) describes a wide variety of current projects to help those who care for elderly people. The initiatives include carer support groups, day and night sitting services, attendant schemes, day care, short-term residential care, courses, training and information and advice.

Mental health in old age: a collection of projects (£1.00) has been produced to draw attention to the range of statutory and voluntary services for the elderly mentally frail. Many are examples of day care projects, carried out by Age Concern groups, MIND groups, councils for voluntary service, and statutory authorities

Available from: Age Concern (England) Information Department, 60 Pitcairn Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3LL.

GANN, R. and HALVES, R.

Stroke: A handbook of Information Sources

Wessex Regional Library and Information Service, 1983. 2nd edn. 0 906132 06 1 £1.50.

The latest title in the Wessex Regional Library and Information Service Communication series is a second edition of the handbook on

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Stroke first compiled in 1978. Now considerably enlarged and updated, it gives general information on stroke (causes, symptoms, treatment, prevention); organizations for patients and families; DHSS benefits; an annotated bibliography of books and leaflets which might help the stroke patient and his family to understand and cope with the condition (including personal accounts); audio-visual materials; background reading from journal articles.

Available from: Wessex Regional Library and Information Service, South Academic Block, General Hospital, Southampton SO9 4XY.

Cash with order only. Cheques should be made payable to: Southampton and S.W. Hampshire Health District.