

# PRESS RELEASE

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## EUROPEAN SUSPENSION OF BEXTRA

The EMEA has today announced a voluntary suspension of Bextra sales and marketing, pending the completion of the review of safety of Cox 2's, which is ongoing. "Today's announcement reinforces our previous advice that Cox 2's should be used after careful consideration of risks and benefits and the lowest effective dose for the shortest duration of time", says Professor Gordon Duff, Chairman of the Committee on Safety of Medicines.

The concern about Bextra relates to reports of suspected serious skin reactions which are now under review. This action is in line with the voluntary suspension of Bextra in the USA. The previous advice on cardiovascular risk associated with Cox 2's is unchanged.

In line with the European action, the MHRA is today issuing updated advice to health professionals and patients on Bextra and advise that patients should see their doctor at the next convenient appointment to arrange alternative pain relieving treatment.

Most suspected adverse reactions have incurred in the USA where Bextra has been used more extensively. Professor Kent Woods, MHRA Chief Executive says "we support the EMEA action in advising health professionals and patients of this new safety concern. There is no immediate new risk and it is important that we review all available data before reaching a final position."

**ENDS**

Notes to Editor:

1. A further update will be made available after the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2005.

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