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China has Diabetes Health Alliance in face of New Challenges

China now has its first diabetes nutrition health alliance, which was launched recently in Beijing.

Initiated by China Diabetes Association, the new alliance is supported by China Health Association, Ministry of Health with China Health Education Center and a number of leading local hospitals in Beijing.

Zhang Fenglou, executive director of China Health Association, said that the recent years saw a rapid increase of diabetes cases in China. But few people in China know how to prevent and treat it, and treating diabetes in China can cost quite a lot.

Xiang Hongding, chairman of China Diabetes Association, said that the rate of diabetes cases in China in the past few years was 9.7%, which means that there are 92 million diabetes patients in China. However, this year sees an increase in rate to 11.6% and the total number of diabetes patient amounts to 114 million.

"In the past four years, diabetes patients in China increased by 220 million in total," said professor Xiang.

Professor Xiang said that the alliance would help to invite more

China Updates is a service provided by U.S.-China Health Products Association. The Newsletters are issued approximately three times a month. China Updates provides news on regulatory environment, new legislation, association activities and any information related to China's natural health products industry.

experts to take specific measures to cope with the new challenge. The alliance will hold seminars in communities with the leading experts to inform the public of how to prevent diabetes and lead a healthy life.

The alliance will also give free treatment to patients with doctors from prominent hospitals in efforts to help those who cannot afford it. (Source: Takungpao.com)

China to Cut Some Import Tariffs Next Year

China will lower tariffs on a range of imported items starting Jan. 1 to boost domestic demand and promote industrial upgrading, the Ministry of Finance said Wednesday.

The government will temporarily reduce tariffs on more than 760 items--putting them below most-favored-nation tariffs, representing an average tax discount of around 60%, the ministry said in a statement posted on its website.

Among the beneficiaries of cuts will be equipment, spare parts and raw materials used in "emerging" sectors that manufacture strategically important items such as aircraft, mobile phones and tablet computers, .

The cuts could help reduce China's trade surplus. In November, the surplus rose to \$33.8 billion from \$31.1 billion in October, largely on the back of resurgent exports, which were up 12.7% on year. Imports grew a more modest 5.3%. (Source: MarketWatch)

Taking a Humane Look at Cosmetics

China is considering ways to reduce animal testing of cosmetics.

The China Food and Drug Administration issued a draft last month related to changes in the registration and licensing of cosmetics, following a ban on the sale of cosmetics developed through animal testing from the European Union in March.

The draft stated that cosmetics made from ingredients that have already been tested and classified as safe will be exempt from animal testing.

Even though the draft regulation, set to come into force in June, does not apply to cosmetics manufactured outside the Chinese mainland, or to "special-use" products such as hair dyes, sunscreens or skin-whitening products, it's been hailed as a breakthrough by animal rights groups.

"The news from China marks a major milestone in our campaign and could constitute a significant watershed in our global efforts to end cosmetics animal testing worldwide," said Troy Seidle, the Humane Society International's Be Cruelty-Free director, in an online news statement.

The Body Shop, Lush, MooGoo and other companies, plus the United States-based non-profit organization Humane Society International, have campaigned for decades for the mandatory testing of cosmetics on animals to be phased out worldwide.

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Many cosmetic companies, such as The Body Shop and Lush, have turned down lucrative opportunities in the Chinese mainland on ethical grounds because in China all imported cosmetics products are subject to mandatory tests that use animals as the subjects.

Wang Yiwen, a financial consultant at Deutsche Bank in Beijing, is a loyal customer of The Body Shop, but like all the brand's fans in China, she either has to rely on friends traveling overseas or on agents at online marketplaces to make her purchases.

"It's a pity they haven't officially entered the Chinese mainland market yet. Most people I know have to buy their products through online agents," said Wang.

"We are delighted to hear that the Chinese government is looking at its policies regarding animal testing. Many animals could be saved from

pain and death by these changes. For Lush, it brings the day nearer when we can, perhaps, trade in China," wrote Hilary Jones, global ethical director for the UK cosmetics producer Lush Retail, in an e-mailed comment.

The Humane Society International estimates that around 300,000 animals are used every year in cosmetics testing in China. The country's stance on animal testing remains the biggest hurdle to the promotion of alternative methods, according to experts.

"Currently, China has no law or regulation requiring alternative methods to be made mandatory, so there hasn't been a huge uptake of those methods," said Jiao Hong, director of the food laboratory at Guangdong Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau.

The Hygienic Standards for Cosmetics, China's guidelines for safety tests on cosmetics, were introduced by the former Ministry of Health in 2007.

The methods specified by the regulation, which is based on guidelines drawn up by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, require that all cosmetic products be subjected to 17 animal-based toxicological tests, such as those for acute oral toxicity, acute eye irritation, skin sensitization and a combined test for chronic toxicity and carcinogenicity.

The skin sensitization test uses 20 guinea pigs as samples and a further 10 as "controls", that is, they don't undergo the tests. Cosmetics are repeatedly applied to a shaved area on the subject animal's back, the condition of the skin is then compared with its control and any changes are noted.

In the combined chronic toxicity/carcinogenicity test, both the test and control groups comprise 100 animals, a 50-50 split of males and females. The tests are conducted continually throughout the animals' life spans, usually about a year.

Li Hua, president of Animal Guardians, a nongovernmental animal rights group, said the problems associated with the protection of lab animals stem from the fact that the general public knows little about what happens in the labs.

"Even animal right activists such as my organization are unable to gain access to inside information, so the industry is effectively closed to outsiders," she said.

Improvements in animal welfare were first introduced by the Ministry of Science and Technology, which issued China's first guidelines on the humane treatment of lab animals -including advice on breeding, transportation and the conduct of the experiments - in October 2006.

Since then, the authorities in a number of areas, including the provinces of Guangdong and Hubei, and Beijing, have formulated their own regulations.

Compared with the laws and regulations in Western countries, though, some species have been omitted



from the list covered by the test regulations, according to He Zhengming, a researcher with the National Institutes for Food and Drug Control.

In an article published in 2011, he noted that the national and local standards include the most-commonly used species, but fail to cover animals such as Mongolian gerbils and domestic cats.(Source: China Daily)

Chinese Don't Know How to Use Drugs

Up to 90 percent of Chinese people do not know how to use medicine correctly, according to a survey from the State

In 2012, the Network of State Adverse Drug Reaction Monitoring received 1.2 million reports on incidents of adverse drug reactions.

"Chinese people need to update their knowledge not only on drug usage, but also on drug use concepts," said Ji Lianmei, a licensed pharmacist with the Beijing United Family Hospital. Ji has been disseminating medical knowledge via Sina Weibo, a Twitter-like social networking service in China.



Ji says that she finds it difficult to explain proper drug use even to her own family. "My young daughter had a mild fever once and my mother wanted to give her some medicine because she thought the fever would cause brain damage. I explained that the fever wouldn't cause brain damage, but when my daughter developed a cough on the third day, my mother worried that it would turn into pneumonia," said Ji, adding that her mother wanted to give the little girl adult medication.

Pediatricians in China have been highlighting the dangers of dosing children with adult. "My mother just

couldn't stand watching my daughter suffering without taking any medicine. She wanted us to give the girl an anti-inflammatory drug," said Ji. It soon became obvious that Ji's daughter had the common cold and she recovered on her own in a week.

Many Chinese people are unaware that mild illnesses like the common cold often resolve themselves without medication, as they were dosed with all kinds of medicines in their

In fact, a lack of awareness about the usage and potential side effects of antibiotics in China

According to a 2012 study by the State Food and Drug Administration, Chinese people continue to self-medicate using powerful drugs to treat minor ailments, a habit that could

A survey of 8,000 people found that roughly 23 percent will take antibiotics as soon as they suspect they have the common cold.



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The Ministry of Health estimates an average of 138 grams of antibiotics are used per person on the mainland each year, nearly 10 times the amount in the United States.

On August 1, 2012, China formally implemented a decree issued by its Ministry of Health on administrative regulations for clinical use of antibacterial agents. This ruling defines all aspects of antibiotic use in hospitals, including selection, procurement, prescription, use, monitoring, and legal responsibility, and is the strictest regulation yet for antibiotic management in China. The major purpose of the new regulations is to ensure rational use of

An estimated one third of the world's population lacks regular access to essential medicines, with this figure rising to over 50 percent of the population in the poorest parts of Africa and Asia. When available, the medicines are often used incorrectly; 50 percent of all medicines are prescribed, dispensed or sold inappropriately, while 50 percent of the patients fail to take their medicines appropriately, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). (Source: Chinanews.com)

PNDC Holds Industry Conference

On December 19, 2013, the National Program Office for Public Nutrition Development Center (PNDC) held a conference focused on the future of China's overall health and nutrition industry.

There were forty-two industry representatives in attendance most of which were domestic with the exception of a couple of foreign attendees from Fonterra and Ariix (MLM).



The conference was broad in nature covering food, dietary supplements and Traditional Chinese Medicine. The point of the conference was to bring attendance to the importance of the industry and its potential in China. Furthermore, that the industry needs to work together to realize regulatory development and sustainable growth.

The PNDC's director Mr. Yu commented that in 2012, China's GDP per capital was US\$ 6,093, which translates to people having more expendable income. This surplus of family income will be mostly spent on increasing families' health and overall wellness. The industry will certainly benefit from this growing trend. (Source: USCHPA)

Food safety is a sore point for millions of Chinese consumers. The food industry is hit by a number of scandals in the past few years.

Public trust in domestic dairy companies was eroded in 2008, when melamine-tainted milk killed six infants and made thousands of others ill.

China Introduces Provincial Food Safety Centers

China will set up 32 provincial food safety monitoring centers as part of a broader plan to build a national network that will cover all counties by 2015.

An official with the National Health and Family Planning Commission (NHFPC) said on Tuesday that provincial-level centers and national laboratories on food safety monitoring will be set up for the comprehensive management of food safety.



Chen Xiaohong, NHFPC's vice minister, said these centers and laboratories will provide "scientific evidence" for national standards on food safety and detecting loopholes in supervision.

According to Chen, the laboratories will be managed by 38 provincial-level centers for disease prevention and control.

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Public trust in domestic dairy companies was eroded in 2008, when melamine-tainted milk killed six infants and made thousands of others ill. *(Source: Chinanews.com)*

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