

# The Medical Letter®

## On Drugs and Therapeutics

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### IN BRIEF

#### **Femcon Fe: A Chewable Oral Contraceptive**

*Femcon Fe* (Warner Chilcott) is being advertised as the world's only chewable oral contraceptive. It was formerly marketed as *Ovcon 35 Fe*. Each packet provides 21 tablets containing 0.4 mg norethindrone and 35 mcg ethinyl estradiol, and 7 tablets with only 75 mg of ferrous fumarate. *Femcon Fe* has the same active hormonal ingredients as *Ovcon 35* (Warner Chilcott), which has been available since 1976, and its generic equivalent *Balziva* (Barr); neither formulation contains iron. The spearmint-flavored *Femcon Fe* pill can be chewed or swallowed whole. According to the package labeling, if the pill is chewed, it should be followed by a full glass of water. The generic equivalent is not chewable, but it costs about 15 cents less per pill, and presumably comes with a lower co-pay in most insurance plans.

**Coming Soon in *The Medical Letter*:**  
Paliperidone (*Invega*) for Schizophrenia  
Panitumumab (*Vectibix*) for Colorectal Cancer  
Dermal Fillers

**Coming Soon in *Treatment Guidelines*:**  
Drugs for Tuberculosis — March 2007  
Drugs for Pain — April 2007  
Choice of Antibacterial Drugs — May 2007

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On Drugs and Therapeutics

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