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RxTx and Micromedex

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**PRODUCT REVIEW / CRITIQUE**

**Product:** RxTx and Micromedex

**Purpose:** Web-based point of care clinical decision-making drug information tools

**URLs:** http://www.pharmacists.ca/products-services/ and http://truenhealth.com/products/micromedex

**Introduction**

Drug information tools are an integral part of medical education and health care practice. Although Western University does not have a pharmacy program, students in the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry and the Faculty of Health Sciences regularly require access to drug information to prepare for their professional careers. It is quite common for academic libraries, especially those with medical and pharmacy programs, to subscribe to one or more drug tool. However, frozen or reduced acquisitions budgets across many Canadian institutions are creating challenges for subscribing to more than one drug resource. This product review will compare two common drug information tools: RxTx and Micromedex Solutions (Micromedex).

**Production Description**

RxTx is the rebranded name for the suite of evidence-based, point of care products available from the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA). RxTx includes the Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties (CPS), Compendium of Products for Minor Ailments (CPMA), Compendium of Therapeutic Choices (CTC), Compendium of Therapeutics for Minor Ailments (CTMA), Clin-Info tool, and Lexi Drug Interaction and Product Identification tool. RxTx offers several subscription packages, including the full suite of CPhA products or the specific content of drug and therapeutic modules. This is a significant change, with budgetary implications for institutions, as previously individual products were purchased. RxTx has an editorial staff that includes expert physicians and pharmacists, who seek out and review the best available evidence.

Micromedex (a Truven Health Analytics product) is an evidence-based, point of care clinical decision-making drug information tool. Its features include drug searching, drug interactions, IV compatibility, drug IV, drug comparison, CareNotes, NeoFax Pediatrics, Red Book, calculators, and toxicology and drug product look up. Micromedex employs in-house editorial staff to evaluate and synthesize the literature across multiple content areas.

The intended audience for RxTx and Micromedex is very similar and include pharmacists, physicians, nurses, and other health care providers. Micromedex also identifies emergency department clinicians, medical librarians, and students and residents as its intended users. Both RxTx and Micromedex are subscription-based resources, with pricing dependent upon institutional needs and user groups.

**Usability**

RxTx and Micromedex are browser-based applications compatible with all common web browsers, and mobile applications are available as part of the subscription. RxTx keeps users within one browser tab as they navigate the resource, and internal tabs below the search bar keep track of visited pages. This tab feature is helpful for backtracking. Micromedex in comparison does not create tabs and like RxTx does not allow users to open new windows. Printing is simple for both products, including selected sections.

Both products have a search bar to enter general search queries, with the option to restrict results to drugs or disease/condition. Micromedex also gives users the choice to restrict to toxicology. Search results in RxTx are displayed in order of keyword occurrence. Micromedex displays three tabs: Quick Answers, In-depth Answers, and All Results. Quick Answers is the first page shown, which is helpful for users seeking general information. Users are still able to browse all the results if they so choose. Both RxTx and Micromedex can filter results, but RxTx allows for...
specific keyword filters whereas Micromedex provides links to related results.

Both products offer support in various formats. RxTx provides Quick Tip Videos, FAQs, and a downloadable user guide. The Micromedex Training Centre makes available web seminars, video demos, and hands-on tutorials. While both provide customer service during regular business hours via telephone and online forms, Micromedex also offers 24-hour technical support.

**Product Features**

Both resources provide monograph information including dosing, contraindications, precautions, adverse effects, warning, toxicology, pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, and patient information. RxTx does not provide a monograph reference list but does include a revision date. In comparison, Micromedex includes a reference list at the end of each monograph as well as a last modified date. The chart below lists additional features in both products.

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Statement of Competing Interests

No competing interests declared.

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