The history of mistakes of the pharmaceutical industry following the example of the Thalidomide treatment in the years 1957-1961

SUMMARY

The first part of the work deals from a historical perspective with methods of treatment of nausea and vomiting, as well as other ailments connected with the initial stage of pregnancy. Also outlined there are currently known facts concerning effectiveness and security of administering the drugs described. Part two concentrates on the beginnings of the Chemie Grünenthal company and the circumstances accompanying the synthesis of Thalidomide, its introduction to the market and statistics concerning use of this drug in countries where it was available. Part three concerns the time when Thalidomide reached the United States and attempts to legalise it. The events have been described that resulted in withdrawal of this drug from the market, as well as teratogenic effects of Thalidomide and its pharmacological mechanism. Next part of the work brings closer the problem of legislation connected with registration of new drugs and their introduction to trade, taking into consideration the changes that occurred after the effects of Thalidomide treatment were revealed. Part five presents further effects of these drugs’ application, both those concerning physical and mental growth of persons injured and those connected with their social status. Part six is focused on the current place of Thalidomide in health care, its potential capabilities, on which there is on-going research, and analogs of Thalidomide – Lenalidomide and Pomalidomide.

The last part of the work contains summary of the collected data and presents conclusions resulting from the whole sequence of events for the pharmaceutical industry.