



Health Newsflash

New Drugs Anticipated in 2004



ESI Canada follows the trail of new drugs coming to market in Canada. This issue provides you with a brief summary of drugs that may have an impact on employer drug plans in 2004.

Biologic Drugs

The use of biologic drugs represents a new approach to treating diseases. These drugs are derived from human or animal cells and are used to modify the body's responses to disease. One particular type of biologic drug is derived from monoclonal antibodies. These substances attach themselves to specific cells and then release chemicals that counteract particular reactions in the body. An example is a drug for blocking the effects of asthma (see Xolair below).

There are approximately 350 biologic drugs currently in the pipeline, with eight potential ones for release into the market in two to three years. The majority of these drugs will be used for treating cancer, immune diseases (arthritis and multiple sclerosis), and infections. These drugs are likely to cost in the thousands of dollars per patient per year.

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In this issue, we highlight five drugs that we may see in 2004.

The following drugs, biologic and chemical, have been highlighted because they represent innovations to treat various diseases.

Amevive [*Am-eh-veeve*] (alefacept) is the first biologic therapy for adults with moderate to severe psoriasis. Psoriasis is a long-term recurring skin disease characterized by scaling bumps and raised patches. Amevive is administered once weekly by injection into the muscle for 12 weeks in a 24 week treatment cycle and will be used in patients who are not responding well or who are intolerant to standard oral therapies such as methotrexate. Amevive has produced durations of remission longer than conventional therapy; however, the cost per treatment cycle is expensive at \$7,000 to \$10,000 US.

Humira [*U-meer-rah*] (adalimumab) is the latest biologic therapy and the first fully human monoclonal antibody for moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis. It acts similarly to Enbrel and Remicade and will be used in patients who have not responded well to the disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs) such as methotrexate. It can be used alone or in combination with other DMARDs. Humira is administered via an injection under the skin, like Enbrel, but is given less frequently (once every other week). The average annual cost is comparable to Enbrel or Remicade at approximately \$18,000-\$20,000 Cdn.

Forteo [*Fort-tay-oh*] (teriparatide) is a new biologic therapy for treating osteoporosis in men and women who are at high risk of fractures. This treatment will be a new therapeutic approach to managing this disease. With its unique mechanism of action, Forteo has shown to build bone rather than just minimize the loss of bone mass. Current drugs, such as the bisphosphonates (Actonel, Fosamax, Didronel) and calcitonin (Miacalcin), work via the latter mechanism. Forteo is expected to be more expensive compared to other therapies for osteoporosis at an annual cost of approximately \$6,000 US.

Strattera [*Strat-tear-rah*] (atomoxetine) is a new non-stimulant therapy for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in adults and children. Studies have shown that it may not have the addiction potential associated with Ritalin, which is currently the standard treatment for ADHD.

*Optimizing the
Value of Drug
and Dental
Benefits*

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Xolair [Zole-lair] (omalizumab) is a biologic monoclonal antibody and is the first one to block the immediate allergic reactions of moderate to severe asthma and hay fever in adults and adolescents. It will be used to relieve symptoms in patients who are inadequately controlled with inhaled corticosteroids (e.g., Flovent). Xolair has shown to decrease the incidence of asthma flare-ups.

There is insufficient price information at this time to assess potential impact on employer drug plans for Strattera and Xolair.

This chart lists the drugs (alphabetically by brand name) we anticipate will appear in Canada in 2004. Please note that some brand names may differ between the U.S. and Canada.

Brand Name (Generic Name)	Uses	Manufacturer	Annual Cost*	Private Payer Market Impact**
Amevive (Alefacept)	Psoriasis	Biogen Idec Canada Inc.	\$\$\$\$	High
Cymbalta (Duloxetine)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Urinary Incontinence 	Eli Lilly Canada, Inc.	\$\$	Neutral
FluMist (Intranasal influenza vaccine)	Influenza	Wyeth Canada	\$	Neutral
Forteo (Teriparatide)	Osteoporosis	Eli Lilly Canada, Inc.	\$\$\$\$	High
Humira (Adalimumab)	Rheumatoid arthritis	Abbott Laboratories, Limited	\$\$\$\$	Neutral to High
Namenda (Memantine)	Alzheimer's disease	Lundbeck Canada Inc.	\$\$	Neutral to High
Replax (Eletriptan)	Migraine	Pfizer Canada Inc.	\$\$	Neutral
Strattera (Atomoxetine)	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	Eli Lilly Canada, Inc.	\$\$	Neutral
Xolair (Omalizumab)	Asthma	Novartis Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc.	\$\$\$	High

* Estimated Cost Range Per Patient Per Year (Cdn\$):

- \$\$\$\$: > \$1,000
- \$\$\$: \$500 - \$1,000
- \$\$: \$100 - \$500
- \$: < \$100

** Impact Rationale:

- High – anticipated to expand market share of therapy class
- Neutral – anticipated to take away existing market share from other drugs in therapy class
- Low – based upon prevalence of disease and existence of other standard therapies

Author: Farah Hemraj, B.Sc.Pharm.
Editors: Johnny Ma, B.Sc.Pharm.
Steven Semelman, Pharm.D.



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