



## Health Newsflash

### New Drugs and Indications Reviewed at the March 2005 DEC Meeting



The Drug Evaluation Committee (DEC) of ESI Canada conducts a monthly review of all new drugs receiving their Notices of Compliance from Health Canada, to ascertain their places in therapy and their possible impacts on the private payer sector. Pricing information is included when the drug is available for sale. However, availability of a drug does not immediately follow its approval by Health Canada. This issue is provided to our insurance customers as a value-added service. We hope you will find this Health Newsflash informative, timely, and useful.

#### Optimizing the Value of Drug and Dental Benefits

#### **New Drugs:**

**Fsme-Immun** [*F-S-M-E Im- mune*] (2.4 mcg/ .5ml injection, Tick-Borne Encephalitis Vaccine) is available as an injection by Baxter Corporation. This is a new vaccine which protects against Tick-Borne Encephalitis (TBE). The vaccine is given in three doses. The second dose is usually given 21 days to 3 months after the first dose, while the third dose is given 9-12 months after the second dose. Immunity lasts for 3 years. TBE usually occurs in Eurasia and is transmitted by ticks. Travelers may be at risk if they walk, camp, or work in forested areas of these territories. The disease may also be acquired through un-pasteurized dairy products from infected animals. Due to its limited use, this drug is expected to have minimal impact to employer drug plans.

#### **New Indications:**

**Synagis** [*Sin-ah-giss*] (50 mg/vial, 100 mg/vial injection palivizumab) is available as an injection by Abbott Laboratories, Limited, and has a new indication for children with congenital heart disease (children born with heart problems). Synagis is currently used for preventing a serious lung disease caused by a specific virus (RSV) in children. As Synagis is only used in hospital and is currently on ESI Canada's Hospital Drug Program (HDP), it will have no impact on employer drug plans using the HDP.

#### **\*Impact Statements**

##### Minimal Impact

1. The estimated cost of the new drug is similar to existing drugs and the new drug is likely to become one of a number of existing drugs used for the medical condition (shifting of market share) or,
2. The estimated cost of the new drug is similar to existing drugs and the new drug has low utilization due to either its place in therapy, its relation to other drugs or the prevalence of the medical condition.

##### No impact

- New drug classified as a hospital drug or a diagnostic which has no impact in the private sector

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