

# DRUG REVIEW



## Recently Introduced Products

VOLUME VI, ISSUE 7

Drug Name	Indication	Potential Impact	Expected Avg Annual Cost
Thelin™	For the treatment of primary pulmonary arterial hypertension or pulmonary hypertension secondary to connective tissue disease.	\$	\$60 000

\$: Est. drug plan expenditure increase of <1%\* \$\$: Est. drug plan expenditure increase of 1-5%\* \$\$\$: Est. drug plan expenditure increase of >5%\*

### Duodopa™ - A New Treatment Option for Advanced Parkinson's Disease (PD)

More than 100 000 Canadians have Parkinson's - from newly diagnosed to more advanced stages of the disease. The majority of newly diagnosed patients are over 65 years of age. PD is a chronic and progressive degenerative disease of the central nervous system.<sup>1</sup> The symptoms of PD include muscular rigidity, tremors, stiffness, slow physical movements (bradykinesia), and sometimes loss of physical movement (akinesia). These symptoms are related to the insufficient formation and action of dopamine produced in the brain.

The most widely used antiparkinson drug is Levodopa (L-dopa) in combination with carbidopa. L-dopa is considered the most effective of all antiparkinsonian drugs. Levodopa is transformed in the body and in the brain to dopamine. The dopamine that reaches the brain reduces the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. Carbidopa helps to ensure that largest amount possible of levodopa reaches the brain where it is needed.<sup>2</sup> Duodopa™ is a levodopa/carbidopa combination gel for continuous administration through a pump.<sup>1</sup>

Duodopa™ is appropriate for patients who have suffered from PD for some years, are no longer responding to oral levodopa therapy, and are in an advanced stage of the disease. The unique drug delivery system, inside the upper intestine through a small tube, allows the patient to individually adjust the delivery of the drug. Dosing of Duodopa™ is adjusted to the needs of each individual patient and is delivered continuously throughout the day. The result is a significantly better control of body movements and improved quality of life compared to traditional oral medication.<sup>3</sup>

Before starting treatments with Duodopa™ patients will be screened to determine suitability, and managed by PD specialists through movement disorder centres. Patients also undergo a test phase of Dupdopa to confirm that the patient is responsive and improving while on Duodopa™ prior to inserting the tube for administration (at the manufacturer's cost).<sup>1</sup> Duodopa™ as a last treatment option is an excellent alternative to invasive neurosurgery. The average cost of Duodopa™ is \$166 a day and \$60,756 per year.

ClaimSecure clients will automatically cover Duodopa™ under existing open drug formularies. For clients that subscribe to ClaimSecure Managed Formularies, Duodopa™ will be placed under Special Authorization. The Special Authorization program for Duodopa™ will ensure that drug plan members first try other optional oral therapies; are screened and managed by the appropriate centres and specialists; respond to the drug during the test phase, and allow for any possible provincial formulary benefit coordination, if applicable.

*If you require additional information about Duodopa™, please contact Shellina Sevany, Manager, Clinical Services Department, at (905) 949-3025 or 1-888-479-7587 ext.3025.*

### Recommendation: Special Authorization / Include

ClaimSecure reserves the right to amend in part or in its entirety stated special authorization clinical guidelines

#### References:

- 1) Solvay Pharma Inc. (July 2007) *Duodopa™ A new treatment approach for Patients with Advanced Parkinson's Disease : Continuous Dopaminergic Stimulation.*
- 2) Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. *Parkinson's disease.* Retrieved July 26, 2007, from the Wikipedia Web site <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parkinsons>.
- 3) Solvay Pharma Inc. Submission for Private Payer Duodopa™ Reimbursement Binder, June 2007

HEALTH LIBRARY MENU SANTÉ



[claimsecure.com](http://claimsecure.com) / [securindemnite.com](http://securindemnite.com)

\* Based on the Financial Impact Analysis per 100 000 lives covered  
© 2007 ClaimSecure Inc.