



## Recently Introduced Products

Drug Name	Indication	Potential Impact	Expected Avg. Annual Cost
Actonel 150 mg	For the treatment of postmenopausal osteoporosis (PMO)	\$	\$687.44
Pristiq	For the symptomatic relief of major depressive disorder (MDD)	\$\$	\$938.05

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

## Metvix®-PDT – New procedure against skin cancer & sun-damaged skin

It's no secret that long-term sun exposure is the number one culprit in the development of skin cancer and age-related skin damage. Approximately 11-26% of the population has pre-cancerous skin lesions, also known as Actinic Keratosis (AK). AK lesions occur in individuals as young as 20 years of age and are most common in people aged over 50 years. It is estimated that up to 10% of these thickened, scaly growths progress to different types of skin cancer, such as in rare cases, basal cell carcinoma (BCC) <sup>1,2</sup>.

Current treatments for both AK and BCC include cryotherapy (freezing) with liquid nitrogen, surgical removal and laser ablation. These procedures are performed in a physician's office, most of which are covered by provincial health insurance plans. On the other hand, topical treatments such as imiquimod (Aldara®) and blue light irradiation with aminolevulinic acid (Levulan® Kerasticks) are not covered by most provincial drug and health plans <sup>1,2,3</sup>.

Metvix®-photodynamic therapy (PDT) is a recently marketed treatment in Canada indicated for thin, non-pigmented AK lesions and primary superficial BCC on the face and scalp. Metvix®, a topical cream containing methylaminolevulinic acid, is directly applied to the lesions followed by photodynamic therapy three hours later. Metvix®-treated lesions are exposed to red light using an Aktilite CL 128 lamp, which activates the Metvix® cream and kills the affected skin cells. Two treatments with Metvix®-PDT are necessary for removal of AK and BCC. Metvix®-PDT is entirely performed in a physician's office and the cream is currently not available in retail pharmacies <sup>1,3</sup>.

The cost of one treatment of Metvix®-PDT is approximately \$300 to \$400, which includes the cost of Metvix® cream and the photodynamic therapy procedure. As two treatments are required, the total cost of therapy is approximately \$600 to \$800 <sup>1</sup>. Like Levulan® Kerasticks, Metvix®-PDT will be excluded from all ClaimSecure drug plans and Managed Formularies based on the potential for cosmetic use and the availability of multiple, effective treatments covered by provincial health programs.

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

### Recommendation: Exclude

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

#### References:

- 1) Metvix-PDT™ Private Payer Submission Binder. Galderma Canada Inc., May, 2009.
- 2) Spencer, JM. Actinic Keratosis: Treatment & Medication. eMedicine. <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/1099775-treatment>. Accessed May 13, 2009.
- 3) Rao, J. Photodynamic Therapy for the Dermatologist. eMedicine. <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/1121517-overview>. Accessed May 13, 2009

