Health Bulletin

FDA Approves First New Class Of ADHD Medication In Decades

(NAPSA)—Patients who live with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) now have another option to control their symptoms. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently approved Strattera™ (atomoxetine HCl), the first FDA-approved new class of medication for ADHD in decades.

Strattera, developed by Eli Lilly and Company, is the first and only FDA-approved treatment for ADHD that is not a stimulant under the Controlled Substances Act. It is the only treatment clinically proven effective in adults with ADHD, and it works differently than existing ADHD medications. As a noncontrolled option, Strattera minimizes prescription hassles by offering the convenience of phone-in refills and samples from a physician.

"Strattera is unique, because of its different mechanism of action for ADHD; it's the first noncontrolled medication indicated for the treatment of ADHD. It provides full-day relief of ADHD symptoms without causing insomnia in most children and adolescents," said Thomas J. Spencer, M.D., associate professor of psychiatry, Harvard Medical School and assistant chief, Pediatric Psychopharmacology Research Program, Massachusetts General Hospital.

ADHD is one of the most common disorders in young people, affecting three to seven percent of school-aged children. ADHD has three main types of symptoms: inattention, hyperactivity and impulsiveness. Symptoms of inattention include: not paying attention, making careless mistakes, not listening, not finishing tasks, not following directions, and being easily distracted. Symptoms of hyperactivity and impulsiveness include fidgeting, talking excessively, running around at inappropriate times, and interrupting others. Many people have symptoms like these from time to time, but patients with ADHD have these symptoms more than others their age. Symptoms must be present for at least six months to be certain of the diagnosis.

Patients coping with ADHD have a new treatment option. It's called Strattera™ (atomoxetine HCl) and unlike other ADHD medications, it is not a controlled substance.

Kathryn Romney, mother of two sons with ADHD, knows the difficulties that the disorder can cause for children and their families. Prior to their diagnosis and treatment, her children struggled with their inability to pay attention and concentrate at home and in school.

"When the boys did their homework, I had to constantly stand over them and refocus their attention," said Mrs. Romney, whose sons took part in the clinical trials for Strattera.

ADHD causes difficulties for both children and adults in multiple areas of their lives, including family and social relationships, school and work. Untreated, ADHD can cause long-term problems such as substance abuse, trouble holding a job and relating to peers, and low self-esteem. Proper diagnosis by experienced medical professionals and treatment are key for children, adolescents and adults coping with ADHD.

"Effective treatment has made a significant difference in our lives. I have seen an improvement in the boys' behavior and their ability to develop relationships, and they have been doing better in school," said Mrs. Romney.

ADHD is not something that children outgrow. Experts estimate that eight million adults in the United States have ADHD. Recent studies have shown a genetic link for ADHD and in fact, many adults recognize symptoms in themselves once their child is diagnosed. Sixty percent of children with ADHD will exhibit symptoms as adults, although hyperactivity tends to decrease with age.

Strattera offers full-day symptom relief with once or twice daily dosing. This eases the burden of having to take medication during the school day and allows adults convenience in their busy lives. The effectiveness of Strattera was demonstrated in treating ADHD with data from six placebo-controlled clinical studies, involving children, adolescents and adults. More than 4,000 patients have taken Strattera in all completed and ongoing clinical trials, some for as long as two and a half years. Strattera capsules will be available in local pharmacies this January. For more information, visit www.Strattera.com.

Note to Editor: Strattera should not be taken at the same time as, or within two weeks of taking, a monoamine oxidase inhibitor, or by patients with narrow angle glaucoma. Patients with a history of high or low blood pressure, increased heart rate, or any heart or blood vessel disease should tell their doctor before taking Strattera. Strattera has not been tested in children less than 6 years of age. Some children may lose weight when starting treatment with Strattera. As with all ADHD medications, growth should be monitored during treatment. Maximum recommended total daily dose of Strattera in patients should not exceed 1.4mg/kg or 100mg, whichever is less. Most people in clinical studies who experienced side effects were not bothered enough to stop using Strattera. The most common side effects in children and adolescents were decreased appetite, nausea, vomiting, tiredness, upset stomach, dizziness, and mood swings. In adults, the most common side effects were problems sleeping, dry mouth, decreased appetite, constipation, upset stomach, nausea, dizziness, problems urinating, painful menstruation, and sexual side effects.