



Therapeutic Class ReviewSM

Eszopiclone (Lunesta[®])

February 2005

New Product(s) for Review

Eszopiclone (Lunesta[®]) - Sepracor

Dossier Provided by Manufacturer: No

Available Therapeutic Alternative(s)

Preferred/Formulary	Non-Prefer/Non-Formulary
triazolam (Halcion [®]) [various]	zolpidem (Ambien [®]) - Sanofi-Synthelabo
temazepam (Restoril [®]) [various]	zaleplon (Sonata [®]) King Pharmaceuticals

Executive Summary

- Eszopiclone (Lunesta) is the first sedative-hypnotic approved by the US FDA for the treatment of insomnia without a specific limitation on its duration of use. (All other sedative hypnotics are approved only for the short-term treatment of insomnia.)
- Eszopiclone (Lunesta) has only been compared to placebo in clinical trials. These studies have fatal threats to their validity and fail to show that eszopiclone (Lunesta) significantly impacts the health of patients suffering from insomnia.
- There are no comparative trials of eszopiclone with other sedative hypnotics to determine differences in safety and efficacy.

Conclusion

Eszopiclone (Lunesta) is non-preferred/non-formulary because studies do not support a superior clinical value relative to other available sedative hypnotics or that long-term treatment of insomnia significantly improves patients' health.

Products

Drug Product	Date of FDA Approval	FDA Approved Indication(s)	Dose/Route	AWP Cost*	Potential Off-Label Use(s)
zaleplon (Sonata)	8/1999	The short-term treatment of insomnia. Sonata has been shown to decrease sleep onset for up to 30 days in controlled clinical studies. Sonata has not been shown to increase sleep time or decrease the number of awakenings.	5 mg to 20 mg orally at bedtime	\$77.40 to \$190.80	Fibromyalgia, depression, anxiety, pain
zolpidem (Ambien)	12/1992	The short-term treatment of insomnia. Ambien has been shown to decrease sleep latency and increase the duration of sleep for up to 35 days in controlled clinical studies.	5 mg to 10 mg orally at bedtime	\$81.90 to \$101.10	Fibromyalgia, depression, anxiety, pain
eszopiclone (Lunesta)	12/2004	The treatment of insomnia with Lunesta decreased sleep latency and improved sleep maintenance.	1 mg to 3 mg orally at bedtime	\$ 111.00	Fibromyalgia, depression, anxiety, pain
triazolam (Halcion)	11/1982	The short-term treatment of insomnia.	0.125 to 0.25 mg orally at bedtime	\$10	Fibromyalgia, depression, anxiety, pain
temazepam (Restoril)	<1982	The short-term treatment of insomnia.	15 to 30 mg orally at bedtime	\$4	Fibromyalgia, depression, anxiety, pain

*AWP (average wholesale price) based on First Data Bank as of 01/2005 for 1 month of therapy. The cost of generically available products are based on TRG maximum allowable cost for commonly prescribed dosages..

Analysis of Scientific Data

- Two randomized controlled trials with fatal threats to validity have been currently published that compare eszopiclone (Lunesta) versus placebo in insomniacs. The results may have shown some statistical difference versus placebo, however, the clinical value of the medication is unclear.
 - The average patient treated for 6 months of eszopiclone (Lunesta) continued to have insomnia severe enough to meet inclusion criteria of the clinical trial. (1)
 - Eszopiclone (Lunesta) has not been shown to improve functional outcomes in validated scales or other measures of patients' health that insomnia may impact (depression, anxiety, missed work, decreased work productivity, etc.) (1,2)
 - The clinical studies excluded patients with comorbidities known to impact insomnia and only included patients with primary insomnia. Persistent primary insomnia accounts for a small minority of patients suffering from insomnia. (1,2)
- Eszopiclone Lunesta's racemate zopiclone has been compared to other sedative-hypnotics in 18 comparative trials. Comparators have included:
 - Short-acting and long-acting benzodiazepines in 16 comparative trials.
 - Zolpidem (Ambien) in one comparative study.
 - The barbiturate pentobarbitone in one clinical trial.
- Zopiclone (Lunesta's racemate) has only demonstrated favorable tolerability versus pentobarbitone. No consistent therapeutic benefit has been demonstrated in clinical comparisons between zopiclone (Lunesta's racemate) and benzodiazepines or zolpidem (Ambien.)

References

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