Desvenlafaxine History

Desvenlafaxine (Pristiq) was approved by the FDA in 2007 (for Wyeth Laboratories) and is the active metabolite of Venlafaxine (Effexor), which lost its patent protection the same year. Desvenlafaxine was approved in Canada and the United States. Desvenlafaxine has higher rates of withdrawal symptoms (discontinuation syndrome) than other SNRI or SSRI antidepressants. For some patients the symptoms can be severe and are considered intolerable. A gradual taper is recommended to minimize symptoms. Desvenlafaxine is the active metabolite of Venlafaxine and can have significant withdrawal symptoms.

Desvenlafaxine was approved by the FDA in 2007 (for Wyeth Laboratories) and is the active metabolite of Venlafaxine (Effexor), which lost its patent protection the same year. Desvenlafaxine was approved in Canada and the United States, but the European Union declined stating in part, "they had some concerns and was of the provisional opinion that Desvenlafaxine could not have been approved for the treatment of major depressive disorder [and] overall, the effectiveness of Desvenlafaxine had not been shown convincingly. In relation to its parent substance, Venlafaxine, Desvenlafaxine seemed to be less effective with no advantages in terms of safety and tolerability." Wyeth withdrew its application for approval in the European Union.

In December 2015 Pfizer announced the results from a Phase 3 study evaluating the efficacy, safety and tolerability of Pristiq (sustained release) in pediatric patients ages 7-17 with Major Depressive Disorder. The results indicate that Pristiq (Desvenlafaxine) were not significantly different from placebo.

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Because prescription medications can cause severe withdrawal reactions, do not stop taking any medication without first consulting your physician. The decision to taper any medication should be discussed with your doctor and done with their consent and support.