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UCB launches Vimpat in the U.S. for Add-on Treatment of Epilepsy in Adults

New antiepileptic drug with novel mechanism of action helps address critical unmet medical need for many people living with uncontrolled epilepsy.

ATLANTA – May 26, 2009 –UCB today announced that Vimpat® (lacosamide), a new antiepileptic drug (AED) is available in the U.S. as an add-on therapy for the treatment of partial-onset seizures in people with epilepsy who are 17 years and older. Vimpat will be available in U.S. pharmacies by the first week of June 2009.

"Vimpat provides new hope in helping patients move closer to the goal of seizure freedom," said Steven S. Chung, MD, Director of Clinical Epilepsy Research at Barrow Neurological Institute in Phoenix. "Vimpat can help patients across the treatment paradigm, from those recently diagnosed who have not achieved seizure control on current therapy, to those who have tried a variety of medications and are still suffering from frequent seizures."

While treatment with one drug remains the goal of AED therapy and provides adequate control to many patients, almost 40 percent of patients with epilepsy receive suboptimal seizure control on one medication. In these situations, a physician may prescribe different treatments until one is found to provide adequate seizure control for the patient.

However, some studies indicate that when primary therapy is well-tolerated, but does not provide adequate seizure control, adding an additional AED to the current one provides more seizure control than continually switching therapies.

The approval of Vimpat is based on efficacy and safety data from one Phase II and two Phase III clinical trials with approximately 1,300 adults with epilepsy who had uncontrolled partial-onset seizures.

Before adding Vimpat, patients experienced a median baseline seizure frequency ranging from 10 to 17 seizures per month, despite being on one to three other AEDs; and 45.2 percent of patients had previously tried seven or more AEDs to control their seizures.

The most common side effects with Vimpat are dizziness, headache, nausea and blurred vision. Patients with heart rhythm problems should discuss this with their physician before taking Vimpat.

Reviewed by Epilepsy Foundation Professional Advisory Board member Dr. Brian Alldredge, PharmD