

Novozymes enables GSK's Eperzan

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The drug uses albumin technology from Novozymes to extend the drug's presence in the patient's body.

Many injected treatments require daily dosing, which can be challenging for patients.

Pharma companies are therefore seeking to develop longer lasting drugs that allow patients to dose less frequently.

Known as VELTIS, the Novozymes technology that extends the active drug lifespan is based on albumin, a naturally occurring protein that can be found in human blood.

"The first approval for a product based on Novozymes' VELTIS technology, and marketed by one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, marks a significant milestone for our half-life extension technology", said Mr Thomas Videbæk, executive vice president, Novozymes. "We consider this authorization as a real proof that VELTIS can offer true benefits to patients, reducing the inconvenience associated with daily drug dosing."

Albumin works as a vehicle that transports the active drug ingredients throughout the body and increases the lifespan of the drug in the patient's system.

VELTIS was originally developed in baker's yeast, and the technology was acquired by Novozymes via the purchase of Delta Biotechnology based in Nottingham, UK in 2006.

As in the case of GlaxoSmithKline's Eperzan, dosing just once a week means that patients can self-administer with greater ease and convenience.

Simplified dosing can help patients comply with the recommended medication regimen and benefit fully from the drug.

Eperzan is the first approved drug based on the Novozymes' albumin technology.

Recently, Novozymes also announced a collaboration with Janssen to evaluate the albumin technology for potential new drug candidates.

GlaxoSmithKline has also applied for marketing approval for Eperzan in the US.

The drug is currently undergoing assessment by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) with a Prescription Drug User Fee Act (PDUFA) review date April 15, 2014.

The authorization does not impact Novozymes' financial outlook for 2014.