

## **Emend™ (aprepitant), New Antiemetic Medicine to Help Prevent Nausea and Vomiting in Chemotherapy Patients, Now Available in Canada**

*~ Emend™ is the first in a new class approved to prevent both acute and delayed nausea and vomiting triggered by chemotherapy ~*

**Toronto, ON (October 16, 2007)** – Cancer patients now have a new, highly effective oral medicine available to help protect them, in combination with existing therapy<sup>1</sup>, from the nausea and vomiting triggered by highly and moderately emetogenic chemotherapy. Discovered and developed by Merck, Emend™ (aprepitant) is a new Neurokinin-1 (NK-1) receptor antagonist that is added to other anti-vomiting and nausea medicines to help protect patients from acute and delayed symptoms. Emend™ is the first in a new class of medicines indicated for the prevention of acute and delayed nausea and vomiting triggered by chemotherapy.

“The nausea and vomiting I experienced with chemotherapy were so debilitating that I couldn’t go to work, take care of my children, or even get out of bed,” says Andrea Jacobs, breast cancer survivor and former chemotherapy patient. “These symptoms not only made my life unbearable for four days after chemotherapy, but they also made me very anxious and nervous about future treatments.”

Previous research has shown there remains a significant need to better control both the acute and delayed symptoms that patients experience, despite their use of antiemetic medicines prior to receiving chemotherapy.<sup>2</sup> Although physicians and nurses accurately estimated the prevalence of acute episodes experienced by their patients, many more patients reported delayed nausea and vomiting symptoms than was predicted by their healthcare provider.<sup>3</sup>

“Delayed Nausea and vomiting are two common complications of cancer chemotherapy and are often underestimated in patients,” said Dr. David Warr, medical oncologist and associate professor, department of medicine at the University of Toronto. “The good news is that aprepitant is now approved for use with another antiemetic to help patients prevent these worrisome and challenging side effects of chemotherapy before they occur.”

Beginning on the first day of the first cycle of chemotherapy, Emend™ is added to an antiemetic regimen that includes a corticosteroid and a 5-HT<sub>3</sub> receptor antagonist in patients receiving highly and moderately emetogenic chemotherapy.<sup>4</sup> Highly emetogenic chemotherapy is therapy that causes most patients to vomit if they do not receive antiemetic medicine prior to their treatment. Antiemetic therapy is therapy that is given to prevent nausea and vomiting prior to the administration of chemotherapy.

### **Nausea and vomiting remain a significant burden for cancer patients**

“Nausea and vomiting are among the top concerns that people have when they receive chemotherapy,” said Sean Hopkins, Clinical Pharmacy Specialist, Breast Cancer, at the Ottawa Hospital Cancer Centre. “Approximately half of all patients receiving highly emetogenic chemotherapy experience delayed nausea and vomiting despite the use of currently available antiemetic medicines.”

The prevalence of these symptoms was demonstrated in an observational, multinational study of 300 cancer chemotherapy patients and their healthcare providers (physician or nurse).<sup>5</sup> The majority of patients in the study (97 per cent) received a 5-HT<sub>3</sub> receptor antagonist for a duration of 3 days. Many (78 per cent) received also a corticosteroid. Practitioners were asked to estimate the incidence of acute and delayed symptoms in their patients using a questionnaire prior to the enrollment of patients. Patients were asked to complete a 5-day diary, recording emetic events and nausea incidences.

### **Emend™ offers a new mechanism of action**

Multiple neurotransmitters (chemical substances that transmit nerve impulses) are implicated in nausea and vomiting. Emend™ is believed to work through a novel mechanism which blocks the nausea and vomiting signals transmitted by the neurotransmitter, Substance P, in the brain. This mechanism is distinct from how current anti-vomiting medicines work.

Therefore, by blocking the actions of multiple neurotransmitters, a regimen of Emend™ added to other antiemetic medicines works to provide improved prevention against acute as well as delayed nausea and vomiting caused by chemotherapy.

### **Emend™ is now available**

Emend™ is available as a convenient three-dose tri-pack containing the dose that is specific for each day of treatment: one 125-mg capsule (white/pink) and two 80-mg capsules (white). Other packaging options include hospital unit doses of 125 mg capsules and a package of 2 x 80 mg capsules.

Emend™ (aprepitant), in combination with a 5-HT<sub>3</sub> antagonist class of antiemetics and dexamethasone, is indicated for the prevention of acute and delayed nausea and vomiting due to highly emetogenic cancer chemotherapy and the prevention of nausea and vomiting in women due to treatment with moderately emetogenic cancer chemotherapy consisting of cyclophosphamide and anthracycline.

### **Important information about Emend™**

Emend™ is available as an oral capsule. The recommended dosing regimen is Emend™ 125 mg orally 1 hour prior to chemotherapy treatment (Day 1) and 80 mg once daily in the morning on Days 2 and 3. Emend™ may be taken with or without food. Chronic continuous use of Emend™ for prevention of nausea and vomiting is not recommended because it has not been studied and because the drug interaction profile may change during chronic continuous use.

Emend™ is a prescription medicine and should not be taken with pimozide, terfenadine, astemizole, and cisapride. Emend™ should not be used by patients who are allergic to any ingredient of the product.

Patients should talk to their doctor about all the other medications they are taking. Emend™ may cause serious life-threatening reactions if used with certain medicines. It can be affected by some medicines. Emend™ may also affect some medicines, including chemotherapy, causing them to work differently in the body.

Doctors may check to make sure their patients' other medicines are working properly, while they are taking Emend™. Patients taking warfarin therapy should be monitored more closely after each 3-day regimen of Emend™ to check their blood clotting time.

Patients should talk to their doctor about all the other medicines they are taking, or if they are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding or have liver problems.

Women using birth control pills while taking Emend™ should also use a back-up method of contraception to avoid pregnancy.

Patients should read the patient information before starting therapy with Emend™ and reread it each time the prescription is renewed in case any information has changed.

Emend™ is not used to treat nausea and vomiting that patients already have. Complete information about precautions and drug interactions with Emend™ can be found in the attached product circular.

### **About Merck Frosst Canada Ltd.**

At Merck Frosst, patients come first. Merck Frosst Canada Ltd. is a research-driven pharmaceutical company discovering, developing and marketing a broad range of innovative medicines and vaccines to improve human health. The Merck Frosst Centre for Therapeutic Research, one of the largest biomedical research facilities in Canada, has the mandate to discover new therapies for the treatment of respiratory diseases, inflammatory diseases, diabetes, osteoporosis and hypertension. Merck Frosst is one of the top 20 R&D investors in

Canada, with an investment of \$114 million in 2006. More information about Merck Frosst is available at <http://www.merckfrosst.com>.

### **Forward-Looking Statement**

This press release contains "forward-looking statements" as that term is defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based on management's current expectations and involve risks and uncertainties, which may cause results to differ materially from those set forth in the statements. The forward-looking statements may include statements regarding product development, product potential or financial performance. No forward-looking statement can be guaranteed, and actual results may differ materially from those projected. Merck undertakes no obligation to publicly update any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise. Forward-looking statements in this press release should be evaluated together with the many uncertainties that affect Merck's business, particularly those mentioned in the cautionary statements in Item 1 of Merck's Form 10-K for the year ended Dec. 31, 2006, and in its periodic reports on Form 10-Q and Form 8-K, which the Company incorporates by reference.

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<sup>1</sup> A 5 HT<sub>3</sub> class of antiemetic and dexamethasme.

<sup>2</sup> Grunberg SM, Deuson RR, et al. Incidence of chemotherapy-induced nausea and emesis after modern antiemetics. Cancer 2004 May 15; 100(10):2261-8.

<sup>3</sup> Grunberg SM, Deuson RR, et al. Incidence of chemotherapy-induced nausea and emesis after modern antiemetics. Cancer 2004 May 15; 100(10):2261-8.

<sup>4</sup> Or in women receiving moderately emetogenic chemotherapy consisting of an anthracycline cyclophosphamide.

<sup>5</sup> Grunberg SM, Deuson RR, et al. Incidence of chemotherapy-induced nausea and emesis after modern antiemetics. Cancer 2004 May 15; 100(10):2261-8.