Generic Lunesta® (eszopiclone) Versions Launched

Background
On April 22, 2014, Mylan, Teva, and Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories announced the launch of generic versions of Lunesta, a controlled substance medication with the generic name of eszopiclone that is used to treat sleeplessness. Sleeplessness or insomnia may be a complaint of patients experiencing pain. Most medications in the same class as eszopiclone, known as sedative-hypnotics, are approved for short periods of use—usually up to 35 days. In clinical trials, eszopiclone has shown safe, effective use for up to 6 months; however, non-drug therapy such as sleep hygiene and cognitive behavioral therapy are recommended for chronic insomnia. Eszopiclone is available in tablet form (to be taken by mouth) in three strengths: 1 mg, 2 mg, and 3 mg.

What's changed?
The generic versions of eszopiclone contain the same sleep-inducing ingredient as the brand name version, Lunesta, and are used in exactly the same way, taken once a day before bedtime. The generic tablets themselves may look different than the brand product, and the price will be less than the brand name—the average wholesale price is approximately 10% lower than the Lunesta brand at this time. Several other generic drug manufacturers (Glenmark, Lupin Pharma, and Roxanne Laboratories) will be introducing their versions of eszopiclone in the near future.

Our Stance/Impact
Eszopiclone is a nonbenzodiazepine hypnotic indicated for the short-term treatment of insomnia that may be related to the injury. When indicated, it is preferred to the older benzodiazepine sleeping pills and lasts a little longer than the popular zolpidem alternative. Healthcare Solutions supports the substitution of all FDA-approved generic equivalents for more expensive brand name medications. Substitution of eszopiclone for Lunesta for the short-term treatment of insomnia related to the injury will provide cost savings to our customers’ drug spend.

For questions regarding this eAlert or to learn more about our Clinical Rx Services, please contact your dedicated Account Executive.

Sources:

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