New Minivelle® Dose for Treating Postmenopausal Osteoporosis

Noven Pharmaceuticals, Inc. announced that the new 0.025 mg/day dosage strength for Minivelle® (i.e., estradiol transdermal system) is now available by prescription nationwide for the prevention of postmenopausal osteoporosis.

The 0.025 mg/day patch is 33% smaller than Minivelle 0.0375 mg/day, which is already the size of a dime, making it the world’s smallest estrogen therapy patch.

Noven’s transdermal delivery of estrogens by Minivelle allows for efficient delivery of estradiol, bypassing first-pass metabolism. The clinical significance of this has not been established and does not mean that Minivelle is safer or more effective than other hormone therapies. During clinical pharmacology studies with Minivelle, 35% or less of participants experienced barely perceptible erythema.


New Advance Care Planning Application

The MyDirectives® mobile™ application (app) allows consumers to digitize their voice and thoughts in a legal advance care plan that is secure and available anywhere in the world. In addition, the app makes it easy for consumers to populate their medical identification with their MyDirectives advance care plan information, which gives physicians access to vital information from a patient’s iPhone® lock screen.

MyDirectives can be used to create an emergency medical care plan that includes medical treatment goals and objectives, preferences regarding palliative and hospice care, organ donation and autopsy, and other critical personal information, such as health care agents. Consumers can answer questions in their own words or pick from a selection of most common answers. Once an advance care plan is created, any consumer with an iPhone running operating system 8 can tap the “Copy Information” button, launch the Apple Health app, and paste their information in the “Medical Notes” field, giving emergency care providers access to vital information without having to unlock the iPhone.


First and Only Orexin Receptor Antagonist for Insomnia Now Available

Merck announced that Belsomra® is now available at pharmacies in the United States for the treatment of insomnia in adults who have difficulty falling and/or staying asleep. Belsomra is the only orexin receptor antagonist approved for the treatment of insomnia in the United States. Orexin is one of the many neurotransmitters in the brain involved in promoting wakefulness and Belsomra selectively blocks orexin receptors.

The recommended dose of Belsomra is 10 mg and taken no more than once per night and within 30 minutes of going to bed, with at least 7 hours remaining before the planned time of awakening. The total dose should not exceed 20 mg once daily.

Belsomra is contraindicated in patients with narcolepsy. Belsomra can impair daytime wakefulness.

In clinical studies, a dose-dependent increase in suicidal ideation was observed, as assessed by questionnaire. The effect of Belsomra on respiratory function should be considered.