Generic Lidoderm® (lidocaine 5%) Version Launched

Background
On 9/16/13, Actavis, Inc. announced the launch of their generic version of Lidoderm®, a topical patch containing lidocaine 5%. Though lidocaine 5% topical patches are not FDA approved to treat nerve pain in patients with general chronic pain, it is a widely accepted practice in workers’ compensation and is recommended in nerve pain guidelines. Patients may apply up to three lidocaine 5% patches to the painful areas of skin for 12 hours before being removed, i.e., 12 hours on, 12 hours off. The advantage with topical lidocaine is a decreased chance of internal side effects, as a minimal amount of the drug is absorbed into the body when applied according to labeled directions. The drug works locally to numb the external area thus decreasing the sense of pain in some individuals.

What’s changed?
The generic version of the lidocaine 5% patch contains the same pain relieving ingredient as the brand name version, Lidoderm®, is used in exactly the same way, and delivers the same medicine through a patch worn on the skin. The packaging and the patch itself may look different, and the price will be less than the brand name (average wholesale price is approximately 10% lower than Lidoderm® brand name). This generic version has been made available almost 2 years earlier than expected due to a settlement agreement made between Actavis and the brand name drug’s manufacturer, Endo Pharmaceuticals.

What it means
For 180 days after the launch of this generic, it will be the only generic version available. After 180 days, other generic manufacturers may apply to the US Food and Drug Administration for approval to launch generic versions. Generic versions of drugs can offer significant cost savings to patients while providing the same effect to the body. We expect the price to reduce further as we pass this first 180 days of generic exclusivity.

Our Stance/Impact
The availability of a generic version of the Lidoderm® patch will mean significant savings to our clients. As noted in our annual Drug Trends report, the branded Lidoderm® patch was in the top 10 drugs by spend and utilization across our book of business. The bulk of the savings seen by our clients will be in 2014, though a reduction in cost may be seen in the 4th quarter of 2013.

For questions regarding this eAlert or to learn more about our Clinical Rx Services, please contact your dedicated Account Executive or email Marketing at marketing@healthcaresolutions.com.


Disclaimer
This alert is offered as a general summary of information retrieved from a variety of sources, including scientific literature and clinical experience. We seek to provide useful, current reference material, but do not claim to provide a comprehensive review and cannot guarantee the accuracy of information presented. Opinions are those of individual authors, and do not necessarily represent the recommendation or endorsement of Healthcare Solutions. This communication does not constitute medical advice.