

22 November 2018
EMA/534113/2018

Public summary of opinion on orphan designation

Somapacitan for the treatment of growth hormone deficiency

On 24 August 2018, orphan designation (EU/3/18/2068) was granted by the European Commission to Novo Nordisk A/S, Denmark, for somapacitan for the treatment of growth hormone deficiency.

What is growth hormone deficiency?

Growth hormone deficiency is a condition where the patient lacks sufficient growth hormone, which is normally released by the pituitary gland at the base of the brain.

Growth hormone promotes growth during childhood and adolescence, and also affects how the body handles proteins, fat and carbohydrates (sugars). In children, the main signs include failure to grow normally and impaired development of bones and skeletal muscle. In adults, the condition can affect the heart, muscles and bones, alter metabolism and cause mental problems such as anxiety and depression.

Growth hormone deficiency is a long-term debilitating condition that includes decreased bone mass, bone fractures and mental problems. The disease can be life-threatening due to the risk of problems with the heart and blood circulation.

What is the estimated number of patients affected by the condition?

At the time of designation, growth hormone deficiency affected approximately 4.7 in 10,000 people in the European Union (EU). This was equivalent to a total of around 243,000 people*, and is below the ceiling for orphan designation, which is 5 people in 10,000. This is based on the information provided by the sponsor and the knowledge of the Committee for Orphan Medicinal Products (COMP).

What treatments are available?

At the time of designation, medicines containing recombinant human growth hormone were authorised in the EU to treat growth hormone deficiency. These were given to patients by daily injection.

*Disclaimer: For the purpose of the designation, the number of patients affected by the condition is estimated and assessed on the basis of data from the European Union (EU 28), Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. This represents a population of 517,400,000 (Eurostat 2018).

The sponsor has provided sufficient information to show that the medicine might be of significant benefit for patients with growth hormone deficiency. Early studies indicate that the use of somapacitan, which has a long duration of action, may be more convenient for patients than current treatments. This assumption will need to be confirmed at the time of marketing authorisation, in order to maintain the orphan status.

How is this medicine expected to work?

Somapacitan is derived from the human growth hormone and acts in the same way to reduce symptoms of the deficiency. Once injected into the patient, somapacitan attaches to a naturally occurring protein in the blood which makes it remain in the body for longer. Because it can remain in the body for longer, the number of times patients need to take their treatment is reduced and thus somapacitan is expected to be more convenient than other treatments.

What is the stage of development of this medicine?

The effects of somapacitan have been evaluated in experimental models.

At the time of submission of the application for orphan designation, clinical trials with somapacitan in patients with growth hormone deficiency were ongoing.

At the time of submission, somapacitan was not authorised anywhere in the EU for growth hormone deficiency or designated as an orphan medicinal product elsewhere for this condition.

In accordance with Regulation (EC) No 141/2000 of 16 December 1999, the COMP adopted a positive opinion on 19 July 2018 recommending the granting of this designation.

Opinions on orphan medicinal product designations are based on the following three criteria:

- the seriousness of the condition;
- the existence of alternative methods of diagnosis, prevention or treatment;
- either the rarity of the condition (affecting not more than 5 in 10,000 people in the EU) or insufficient returns on investment.

Designated orphan medicinal products are products that are still under investigation and are considered for orphan designation on the basis of potential activity. An orphan designation is not a marketing authorisation. As a consequence, demonstration of quality, safety and efficacy is necessary before a product can be granted a marketing authorisation.

For more information

Sponsor's contact details:

Contact details of the current sponsor for this orphan designation can be found on EMA website, on the medicine's [rare disease designations page](#).

For contact details of patients' organisations whose activities are targeted at rare diseases see:

- [Orphanet](#), a database containing information on rare diseases, which includes a directory of patients' organisations registered in Europe;
- [European Organisation for Rare Diseases \(EURORDIS\)](#), a non-governmental alliance of patient organisations and individuals active in the field of rare diseases.

Translations of the active ingredient and indication in all official EU languages¹, Norwegian and Icelandic

Language	Active ingredient	Indication
English	Somapacitan	Treatment of growth hormone deficiency
Bulgarian	Сомапацитан	Лечение на дефицит на растежния хормон
Croatian	Somapacitan	Liječenje manjka hormona rasta
Czech	Somapacitan	Léčba deficitu růstového hormonu
Danish	Somapacitan	Behandling af væksthormonmangel
Dutch	Somapacitan	Behandeling van groeihormoondeficiëntie
Estonian	Somapatsitaan	Kasvuhormooni puudulikkuse ravi
Finnish	Somapasitaani	Kasvuhormonin puutoksen hoito
French	Somapacitan	Le traitement de la déficience en hormone de croissance
German	Somapacitan	Behandlung eines Wachstumshormonmangels
Greek	Σωμαπασιτάνη	Θεραπεία της ανεπάρκειας της αυξητικής ορμόνης
Hungarian	Szomapacitán	Növekedési hormon hiány kezelése
Italian	Somapacitan	Trattamento del deficit di ormone della crescita
Latvian	Somapacitāns	Augšanas hormona deficīta ārstēšana
Lithuanian	Somapacitanas	Augimo hormono stokos gydymas
Maltese	Somapaċitan	Kura ta' nuqqas tal-ormon tat-tkabbir
Polish	Somapacytan	Leczenie niedoboru hormonu wzrostu
Portuguese	Somapacitano	Tratamento do défice de hormona de crescimento
Romanian	Somapacitan	Tratamentul deficienței de hormon de creștere
Slovak	Somapacitan	Liečba nedostatku rastového hormónu
Slovenian	Somapacitan	Zdravljenje pomanjkanja rastnega hormona
Spanish	Somapacitan	Tratamiento de la deficiencia de la hormona del crecimiento
Swedish	Somapacitan	Behandling av tillväxthormonbrist
Norwegian	Somapacitan	Behandling av veksthormonmangel
Icelandic	Somapacitan	Meðferð við vaxtarhormónskorti

¹ At the time of designation