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## **BuTrans<sup>TM</sup> / Norspan<sup>TM</sup> (Buprenorphine) Patches improve quality of life in patients with severe pain due to osteoarthritis**

**15<sup>th</sup> September, Istanbul, Turkey:** Data presented today show that the once-a-week transdermal buprenorphine patch, **BuTrans<sup>TM</sup>**, is able to provide the same level of pain relief as 8-hourly doses of sub-lingual buprenorphine tablets, without any increase in side-effects or tolerability.

Dr C McDonald, explained the background to this new research, "Around a hundred million patients across Europe suffer with painful arthritic diseases such as osteoarthritis.

The option of this low dose transdermal opioid treatment offers a substantial improvement in convenience for these patients with severe pain. In addition, the transdermal route of drug administration, provides a constant - albeit reduced - concentration of opiate which reduces many of the side-effects associated with the use of strong opioid therapy, whilst offering continuous analgesia.

"However, the particular significance of this research is that it demonstrates buprenorphine patches provide an equivalent efficacy in terms of pain relief to traditional oral medication, with the added benefits of transdermal administration.

The data was acquired through a double-blind, parallel group study<sup>1</sup>, conducted by Napp Pharmaceuticals, in which patients with moderate to severe pain caused by hip and/or knee osteoarthritis (OA) were randomised to receive either treatment with **BuTrans<sup>TM</sup>** transdermal patch (BTP) or sublingual buprenorphine (SLB). Doses of both drugs were titrated up to a maintained level of pain relief over 21 days (BTP doses: 5 µg/h to 20 µg/h; SLB doses: 200 µg to 400 µg 8-hourly). Those patients who achieved effective pain control were entered into a 28-day assessment period during which their quality of life; sleep; overall pain and severity of OA symptoms were all evaluated\*.

The **BuTrans<sup>TM</sup>** patch provided comparable symptom relief to STP in every category measured. Before the trial, 79% of patients in the STP group and 73% of the BTP group reported being woken at least twice a night by their pain. At its conclusion, those figures had been reduced to 24% and 20%, respectively. Both groups also showed equitable improvements in all the categories for assessment of pain intensity and of the interference from pain on normal daily living. The occurrence of other OA symptoms such as stiffness and impaired physical function were also greatly reduced by both treatments to a similar degree.

Dr McDonald concluded that “the 7-day **BuTrans<sup>TM</sup>** patch gives a comparable improvement in quality of life to 8-hourly sublingual buprenorphine in patients with severe OA pain”.

**-ENDS-**

For further information, or to request an interview with a member of the study team, please do not hesitate to contact:

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#### **Note to editors**

- Buprenorphine patches are only registered in the following European countries: AT, DK, CZ, DE, IS, IE, HU, LU, NO, PT, SK, SE and UK
- Buprenorphine patches are not licensed for use in Turkey
- \*The quality of life measures used during the assessment period were:
  - Sleep questionnaire
  - Brief Pain Inventory (BPI)
  - Western Ontario and McMaster Universities (WOMAC) OA index

#### **References**

1. Abstract presentation at the European Federation of IASP Chapters (EFIC) 2006. **BuTrans<sup>TM</sup>** (buprenorphine) patches improve quality of life in patients with osteoarthritis (OA). C. McDonald, M. Wilson, J. Todd, Napp Pharmaceutical Research Limited; Cambridge Science Park, Cambridge, UK