

Intas becomes first to launch Romiplostim in India

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One of India's leading pharmaceutical companies, Intas Pharmaceuticals, takes a revolutionary step towards making therapy for chronic immune thrombocytopenia (ITP) more accessible to patients by being the first to launch Romiplostim in India under the name Romy.

Romiplostim is one of the most efficacious agents with proven long-term benefits in chronic ITP. It represents the standard of care but has been available only internationally since 2008. It is estimated that around 42,000 patients are diagnosed with ITP in India every year. Less than 10% of patients which include adults, as well as children, have access to the treatment which is required to maintain adequate platelet counts for a longer duration. In ITP, long term use of drugs is required to maintain adequate platelet count.

The currently available standard of care therapy for chronic ITP costs approximately ~Rs.60,000 per month, which can financially drain most patients. Hence, there was an unmet need for a drug like Romiplostim, which is accessible to the majority of patients and gives one of the best responses amongst the available treatment options. To fulfil this unmet need, Intas Pharmaceuticals Ltd. introduces Romiplostim for the first time in India, with the brand name Romy®. With the launch of Romy®, which is priced at Rs. 2,995 for a dose of 250 mcg, the monthly cost of treatment for most patients will be less than Rs.12,000, a huge relief to the chronic ITP patients across the country.

Dr. Mammen Chandy, Director of Tata Medical Center, Kolkata and Padma Shri award winner, shared his views on this landmark launch, saying, "Romiplostim's introduction in India will help clinicians immensely as it will add to their therapeutic armamentarium in managing thrombocytopenia due to Chronic ITP and Bone Marrow Failure. Even in patients developing hepatotoxicity due to Eltrombopag, Romiplostim will be considered as a choice of treatment."

Talking more about the launch, Dr. MB Agarwal, one of the leading haematologists in the country, said, "Romiplostim is an injection given below the skin (like insulin) once a week which was available in U.S., Europe and Australia for almost a

decade but was never marketed in India. Patients were using an oral pill - Eltrombopag on a daily basis at the cost of almost 2,750 per day. With Intas, Romiplostim's cost for treating chronic ITP will come down by almost six times. Approved for ITP, this drug may be used by clinicians as per their discretion for managing low platelet counts due to other reasons as well."

ITP is an autoimmune blood disorder which leads to low platelet counts. Platelets are responsible for the clotting of blood, and a reduced platelet count can lead to life-threatening bleeding complications, including bleeding in the brain.