

Venus Remedies bags US patent for Achnil

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Venus Remedies, a research-oriented global pharmaceutical company, has bagged a patent from the United States Patent Office for Achnil, a once-a-day painkiller injection developed by the Venus Medicine Research Centre (VMRC), the R&D wing of Venus Remedies. The patent will remain in force till 2032. The company made the official announcement to this effect on January 29, 2014.

"The formulation will be commercialised in the US market through technology transfer/outlicensing of exclusive marketing rights route, and we are open to such deals," said Venus Remedies Chief Financial Officer Mr Dheeraj Aggarwal.

Containing aceclofenac, a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), Achnil is a pioneering product developed by the VMRC in its efforts to develop a controlled release formulation based on the novel drug delivery system. While the US represents the largest market for pain management worldwide, NSAIDs account for 28% of the global painkiller market, the size of which was US \$10.22 billion in 2013. The share of injectables in this market is 15%, making it a market worth US \$1.5 billion. Expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.1%, this potential market for Achnil will be worth US \$1.75 billion by 2018.

It is estimated that 215 million people in the US aged 20 years and above either suffer from pain in one or more body parts, including joints, lower back, neck and face/jaw, or undergo dental pain and headaches/migraines. About 70 million surgical procedures are performed annually in the US and 80 per cent of these patients experience post-surgical pain, of which cases of severe pain constitute 11-20 per cent. In 2012, more than 31 million non-fatal traumatic cases accompanied by severe pain were recorded. A recent survey found that 25% of the US population suffers from musculoskeletal or lower back pain, 18% suffer from neck pain and 17% from knee and shoulder pain.

Achnil is the best and safest option to address such pains. The aceclofenac-based formulation can relieve acute as well as chronic pain and inflammation arising from rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, lower back pain, ankylosing spondylitis, and dental, post-traumatic pain, gynaecological and cancer-related pains.

An aceclofenac injection is effective for 24 hours as against the conventional daily dose of three injections of diclofenac given every 8 hours. It not only reduces the number of pricks but also drastically reduces the side-effects associated with the frequent use of NSAIDs. Aceclofenac is designed in such a way that the product is never released in super or sub-therapeutic zones and is hence highly safe and practically free from side effects.

It took the VMRC more than five years to develop this product, which has received an overwhelming response from the medical fraternity in India since it was launched in the country two years ago.

It is projected that the global market for pain management will reach US \$60 billion by 2015. More than 1.5 billion people worldwide suffer from chronic pain of varying degrees. An estimated 3-4.5% of the global population suffers from neuropathic pain, the incidence of which increases in direct proportion to age.

"In view of the rise in the population of elderly people in regulated markets and absence of safer pain management therapies, the demand for better products to address acute and chronic pains is also on the rise. We have developed Achnil to address this unmet need," said Dr Manu Chaudhary, Joint Managing Director, Venus Remedies Ltd, and Director, Research, VMRC. Venus has also secured a US patent for its novel research products Elores, Potentox and Vancoplus.