



PHARMACEUTICALS EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

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News / Story reproduced with thanks:- **NDTV profit**

Novo Nordisk launches diabetes drug in India

Archana Shukla, June 8, 2010 (Mumbai)

Direct link to the News/Story:-

<http://beta.profit.ndtv.com/news/show/novo-nordisk-launches-diabetes-drug-in-india-72455>

Leading healthcare company Novo Nordisk on Monday announced the launch of its new global blockbuster injectible offering Victoza, a drug for treatment of diabetes, in India.

Part of the liraglutide family of drugs, Victoza, which also helps to reduce obesity, is targeted at diabetic population who produce insufficient insulin, more commonly known as type 2 diabetes.

While 90 per cent of diabetic population in India suffers from type 2 diabetes, Victoza's acceptance will still be in a niche patient population, feels diabetologists. It is because liraglutide cannot be taken as a first line of therapy without tablets and lifestyle management.

“It will be a good add on therapy for diabetes treatment but only on well chosen patients but the high price could be a concern for the larger population,” said Dr Phulrenu Chauhan, consultant endocrinologist at Hinduja Hospital.

Victoza, already selling in the US and Europe, was launched in India at a price of Rs 4300 for a 18 milligram pack much higher than other available diabetes drugs in the market such as Januvia, Byetta, Metformin, Sulfonyl urea which may limit the drug's reach.

“In foreign countries where this drug is sold, people are covered under insurance. But here (in India) everybody has to pay out of pocket. So, price factor will limit it,” said Dr A K Jhingan of Delhi Diabetic Association.

While reeling under concerns of side effects of Victoza, Novo Nordisk has initiated a 5 year long global clinical trials on 9,000 patients to study any impact on cardiovascular system, with India as a key contributor.

Even as Victoza brings down the needle usage and improves diabetes management for patients, Novo Nordisk may need to bring down the prices like other MNCs to suit the Indian population, while sorting out the concerns over side effects.