Ramelteon Benefits Shift Workers With Insomnia

BY DAMIAN MCNAMARA

Miami Bureau

ORLANDO — Ramelteon is effective for a subset of patients with insomnia, according to a presentation at a psychopharmacology congress sponsored by the Neuroscience Education Institute. In addition, because the agent works on melatonin receptors, a potential off-label use is for patients with shift-work disorder.

Ramelteon (Rozerem, Takeda Pharma-

ceuticals) targets the melatonin receptors MT1 and $\bar{\text{MT2}}$. The agent is approximately 10 times more potent than melatonin. Other approved drugs promote sleep by increasing γ -aminobutyric acid (GABA), which is normally released by the suprachiasmatic nucleus in the brain.

"Ramelteon is a very interesting drug. It is the first on the market for sleep that does not work on the GABA system," Dr. Wallace B. Mendelson said. The melatonin receptor agonist is a very short acting drug with a half-life of 1-2 hours. "It is very potent for helping people fall asleep but not as effective for those who wake up early. So it's for a subset of patients."

The Food and Drug Administration approved ramelteon for treatment of insomnia characterized by difficulty with sleep onset. "It is not a DEA-classified substance, only a hypnotic without potential for dependence," said Dr. Mendelson, psychopharmacology consultant for many pharmaceutical companies, including Takeda Pharmaceuticals North America Inc.

A delay to peak therapeutic effect is another distinction of ramelteon, compared with benzodiazepines and newer, nonbenzodiazepine GABA agonists such as zolpidem (Ambien, Sanofi-Aventis) or eszopiclone (Lunesta, Sepracor). Dr. Mendelson said, "It can take up to a week for full effect, so caution patients that they may not feel tired right away." Dr. Mendelson is also a consultant, an advisor, and on the speakers' bureau for Sanofi-Aventis and Sepracor Inc.

People with shift-work sleep disorder can experience excessive daytime sleepiness because their body rhythm stays the same but the world changes around them, Dr. Mendelson said. "No one knows why some people are more susceptible to this, except it is harder to adapt to nighttime shift work as you get older."

Pharmacotherapy with a sleep aid might be sufficient for a shift worker who complains only of sleepiness or trouble going off to sleep, Dr. Mendelson said. However, "if they are having trouble with both sleep and waking, it might make sense to try to help them shift to the new time. One way is to use melatonin."

Exogenous melatonin can shift circadian rhythms. Melatonin taken in the evening can shift a person's circadian rhythm earlier while melatonin in the morning can shift it later, he said.

"I have a real issue with the quality and standardization of melatonin. It's not consistent, which is why I prefer a drug like Rozerem," Dr. Mendelson said. "Rozerem is not indicated for this, but some research indicates it can shift circadian rhythm with off-label use similar to melatonin."

Another option for circadian rhythm adjustment is bright light therapy. "I like bright light therapy because it's more benign—but it works the opposite." In the morning, the therapy pushes circadian rhythm phase earlier, and at night, it pushes it later.

Insomnia rarely occurs alone, Dr. Mendelson said. "About 80% of insomnia patients you see have some other disorder. The old name was secondary insomnia. Us sleep guys are now calling this comorbid insomnia."

Ramelteon might be an appropriate choice for patients with sleep apnea, Dr. Mendelson said. A significant minority of sleep apnea will present with insomnia as the primary complaint. "We need to carefully diagnose because most of the agents we prescribe for insomnia can make sleep apnea worse, except ramelteon or the tricyclic antidepressants."

The probability of diagnosing a psychiatric disorder increases among patients who complain of insomnia (Sleep Med. 2005;6:549-53). In this study, a survey of 200 general hospital patients indicated 57% reported insomnia and 50% reported at least one psychiatric disorder.

Insomnia can play a major role in several psychiatric illnesses, especially depression, Dr. Mendelson said. "Targeting insomnia with sleep aids and behavioral therapy can improve outcomes." Insomnia may also signal depression onset. "On average, 41% of people will have insomnia preceding depression."

orduld de prescribed un dispensed sparingly. Misuse of Amphetamine may cause sudden death and serious cardiovascular adverse events.

The efficacy of ADDERALL XR° in the treatment of ADHD was established on the basis of two controlled trials in children aged to 12, one controlled trial in adolescents aged 13 to 17, and one controlled trial in adults who met DSM-IV° criteria for ADHD, along with extrapolation from the known efficacy of ADDERALL°, the immediate-release formulation of this substance. CONTRAINDICATIONS

bluse. During or within 14 days rollowing the autimissiation or morocalinic sources minimos (hypotensia and ARRININGS Serious Cardiovascular Events Sudden Death and Pre-existing Structural Cardiac Abnormalities or Other Serious Heart Problems Children and Adolescents Sudden death has been reported in association with CNS stimulant treatment at usual doses in children and adolescents with structural cardiac abnormalities or other serious heart problems. Although some serious heart problems alone carry an increased risk of sudden death, stimulant products generally should not be used in children or adolescents with known serious structural cardiac abnormalities, cardiomyopathy, serious heart rhythm abnormalities, or other serious cardiac problems that may place them at increased vulnerability to the sympathomimetic effects of a stimulant drug (see CONTRAINDICATIONS).

them at increased vulnerability to the sympathomimetic effects of a stimulant drug (see CONTRAINDICATIONS). Adults
Sudden deaths, stroke, and myocardial infarction have been reported in adults taking stimulant drugs at usual doses for ADHD.
Although the role of stimulants in these adult cases is also unknown, adults have a greater likelihood than children of having serious
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stimulant medications cause a modest increase in average blood pressure (about 2-4 mmHg) and average heat rate rate
(about 3-6 bpm) (see ADVERSE EVENTS), and individuals may have larger increases. While the mean changes alone would
not be expected to have short-term consequences, all patients should be monitored for larger changes in heart rate and blood
pressure. Caution is indicated in treating patients whose underlying medical conditions might be compromised by
increases in blood pressure or heart rate, e.g., those with pre-existing hypertension, heart failure, recent myocardial
infarction, or ventricular arrhythmia (see CONTRAINDICATIONS).
Schessing Cardiovascular Status in Patients being Treated with Stimulant Medications
Children, adolescents, or adults who are being considered for treatment with stimulant medications should have a careful
instory (including assessment for a family history of sudden death or ventricular arrhythmia) and physical exam to assess for
the presence of cardiac disease, and should receive further cardiac evaluation if findings suggest such disease (e. electrocardiogram and echocardiogram). Pat

prior test evidence of seizures. In the presence of seizures, the drug should be discontinued. Visual Disturbance Difficulties with accommodation and blurring of vision have been reported with stimulant treatment. PRECAUTIONS General: The least amount of amphetamine feasible should be prescribed or dispensed at one time in order to minimize the possibility of overdosage. ADDERALL XRP's should be used with caution in patients who use other sympathomimetic drugs. Ties: Amphetamines have been reported to exacerbate motor and phonic ties and Tourette's syndrome. Therefore, clinical evaluation for ties and Tourette's syndrome in children and their families should precede use of stimulant medical evaluation for ties and Tourette's syndrome in children and their families should precede use of stimulant medical social stimulant medicals such as operating machinery or vehicles; the patient should therefore be exatinoed accordingly.

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approximately 2.4. 1.5, and 0.8 times, respectively, the maximum recommended human dose of 30 mg/day [child] on a mg/m² body surface area basis.

Amphetamine, in the enantiomer ratio present in ADDERALL® (immediate-release)(d- to 1- ratio of 3:1), was not clastogenic in the mouse bone marrow micronucleus test in w'va and was negative when tested in the E.coli component of the Ames test in witro. (1-Amphetamine, 10:1) enantiomer ratio) has been reported to produce a positive response in the mouse bone marrow micronucleus test; and equivocal response in the Ames test, and negative responses in the in vitro sister chromatid exchange and chromosomal aberration assays.

Amphetamine, in the enantiomer ratio present in ADDERALL® (immediate-release) (d- to 1- ratio of 3:1), did not adversely affect fertility or early embryonic development in the rat at doses of up to 20 mg/kg/day (approximately 5 times the maximum recommended human dose of 30 mg/day on a mg/m² body surface area basis).

Pregnancy, Pregnancy Category C. Amphetamine, in the enantiomer ratio present in ADDERALL® (d- to 1- ratio of 3:1), had no apparent effects on embryorical amorphological development or survival when orally administered to pregnant rats and rabbits throughout the period of organogenesis at doses of up to 8 and 16 mg/kg/day, respectively. These doses are approximately 1.5 and 8 times, respectively, the maximum recommended human dose of 30 mg/day (child) on a mg/m² body surface area basis.

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re no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. There has been one report of severe congenital bony by, tracheo-esophageal fistula, and anal atresia (vater association) in a baby born to a woman who took dextroamphet-ulfate with lovastatin during the first trimester of pregnancy. Amphetamines should be used during pregnancy only if mital benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus.

togenic Effects: Infants born to mothers dependent on amphetamines have an increased risk of premature delivery and the weight. Also, these infants may experience symptoms of withdrawal as demonstrated by dysphoria, including a Nursing Mothers: Amphetamines are excreted in human milk. Mothers taking amphetamines should be advised to rom nursing.

3 years of age. Geriatric Use: ADDERALL XR® has not been studied in the geriatric population.

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ADVERSE EVENTS

Hypertansion: (See WARNINGS section) In a controlled 4-week outpatient clinical study of adolescents with ADHD, isolated systolic blood pressure elevations ≥15 mmHg were observed in 7/64 (11%) placebo-freated patients and 7/100 (7%) patients received patients and 27/100 (22%) ADDERALL XR®-treated patients. Similar results were observed in 16/44 (25%) placebo-freated patients and 22/100 (22%) ADDERALL XR®-treated patients. Similar results were observed at higher doses. In a single-dose pharmacokinetic study in 23 adolescents, isolated increases in systolic blood pressure (above the upper 95% CI for age, gender and stature) were observed in 2/17 (12%) and 8/23 (35%), subjects administered 10 mg and 20 m ADDERALL XR®, respectively. Higher single doses were associated with a prateat increase in systolic blood pressure. All increases were transient, appeared maximal at 2 to 4 hours post dose and not associated with symptoms. The premarketing development program for ADDERALL XR® included exposures in a total of 135 participants in clinical trials (635 pediatric patients, 350 adolescent patients, 248 adult patients, 28 healthy adult subjects). Of these, 635 patients (age) for 12 were evaluated in two controlled clinical studies, one open-label clinical studies, and two single-dose clinical pharmacology studies (N=40). Safety data on all patients are included in the discussion that follows. Adverse reactions were assessed by collecting adverse events, results of physical examinations, vital signs, weights, laboratory nanlyses, and EGS. Adverse events during exposure were obtained primarily by general inquiry and recorded by clinical investigators using merminology of their own choosing. Consequently, it is not possible to provide a meaningful estimate of the proportion of individuals experiencing adverse events represent the proportion of individuals experiencing adverse events the proportion of individuals

Receiving ADDERALL 2 584 Patient Clinical St Body System		ence Than on Plac ADDERALL XR® (n=374)	Placebo (n=210)
General	Abdominal Pain (stomachache) Accidental Injury Asthenia (fatigue) Fever Infection Viral Infection	14% 3% 2% 5% 4% 2%	10% 2% 0% 2% 2% 0%
Digestive System	Loss of Appetite Diarrhea Dyspepsia Nausea Vomiting	22% 2% 2% 5% 7%	2% 1% 1% 3% 4%
Nervous System	Dizziness Emotional Lability Insomnia Nervousness	2% 9% 17% 6%	0% 2% 2% 2%

Table 2 Adverse Events Reported by 5% or more of Adolescents Weighing ≤ 75 kg/165 lbs Receiving ADDERALL XR® with Higher Incidence Than Placebo in a 287 Patient Clinical Forced Weekly-Dose Titration Study*					
Body System	Preferred Term	ADDERALL XR® (n=233)	Placebo (n=54)		
General	Abdominal Pain (stomachache)	11%	2%		
Digestive System	Loss of Appetite b	36%	2%		
Nervous System	Insomnia ^b Nervousness	12% 6%	4% 6%²		
Metabolic/Nutritional	Weight Loss b	9%	0%		

Body System	Preferred Term	ADDERALL XR® (n=191)	Placebo (n=64)
General	Asthenia Headache	6% 26%	5% 13%
Digestive System	Loss of Appetite Diarrhea Dry Mouth Nausea	33% 6% 35% 8%	3% 0% 5% 3%
Nervous System	Agitation Anxiety Dizziness Insomnia	8% 8% 7% 27%	5% 5% 0% 13%
Cardiovascular System	Tachycardia	6%	3%
Metabolic/Nutritional	Weight Loss	11%	0%
Urogenital System	Urinary Tract Infection	n 5%	0%

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