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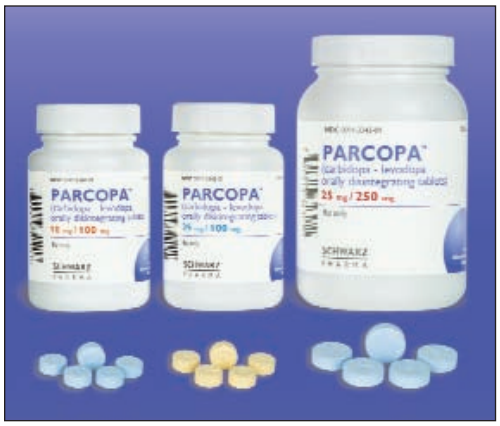
PARCOPA™ ORALLY DISINTEGRATING TABLETS CONVENIENT TREATMENT FOR SYMPTOMS OF PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Parcopa™ (carbidopa-levodopa orally disintegrating tablets) is a combination of carbidopa and levodopa for the treatment of Parkinson's disease. Parcopa's unique formulation begins to dissolve on the tongue in seconds, and can be swallowed without the need for water, thereby providing patients suffering from Parkinson's disease convenience and fast access to their medication. It enables patients to cope with the daily challenges of managing this complex disease. The tablets utilize orally disintegrating technology to deliver the medicine without the need for water or chewing, and can be taken anytime, anywhere. Developed and marketed by **SCHWARZ PHARMA** (Milwaukee, WI), Parcopa is used to treat the symptoms of Parkinson's disease, including tremors, stiffness, and slowness of movement, and may permit the patient better mobility. Parcopa is a therapeutic alternative to conventional Sinemet® (carbidopa-levodopa) Tablets, and has the same strengths and dosing schedule. Ivan Perez, MD, Chief Neurologist, Lakeway Regional Hospital, Morristown, TN, says, "Parcopa has the same known effects as carbidopa-levodopa, so it is safe to switch patients from Sinemet® to Parcopa."



The nature of Parkinson's disease and its treatment require that carbidopa-levodopa be taken regularly–often several times daily in most patients. However, patients' nonadherence to a strict dosing schedule may leave them with reduced symptom control or the appearance of adverse effects (*1*). Additionally, Parkinson's patients may experience symptoms such as morning rigidity or "off" times with episodes of decreased movement or complete immobility, which can make dosing more difficult. With Parcopa, patients can easily take their medication upon waking to help get their morning routine started, and also have convenient access to their medication throughout the day. Study results suggest that, in addition to efficacy and tolerability, patient preferences and medication convenience contribute to patients' satisfaction with their medication and may, therefore, affect treatment adherence and its success (*2, 3*). William Koller, MD, PhD, Director of Movement Disorders, Department of Neurology, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (Chapel Hill, NC), notes that a chief benefit of Parcopa is that patients can take it with them for easy access. "They can have it with them, put it in their mouth; it dissolves quickly, and they are done with it. It's an easier way to give carbidopa-levodopa, which continues to be the best drug to treat Parkinson's disease. The ease of use and convenience for the patient is a

very compelling reason for prescribing Parcopa."

A recent clinical study in 60 patients with Parkinson's disease showed that more than twice as many patients preferred the orally dissolving Parcopa tablets (45%) compared to the conventional tablets (20%). In patients who preferred Parcopa, areas of preference included greater access to medication to treat "off" times, ease of performing daily activities, reduced concern about swallowing medication, use for nighttime dosing, ease of compliance with dosing schedule, and feeling less self-conscious about others observing use of medication (*1*).

Mark F. Lew, MD, Professor of Neurology, Director, Division of Movement Disorders, Keck/USC School of Medicine (Los Angeles, CA), says that patients are open to trying new medications. "Parcopa is a new formulation of carbidopa-levodopa, and many patients find that with its pleasant-tasting mint flavor and orally disintegrating formulation, Parcopa is more convenient. It is nice to be able to offer patients an alternative to regular generic Sinemet® that is convenient and easy-to-use, as well as safe and well-tolerated."

Parcopa is contraindicated for concomitant use with nonselective monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitors, in patients with known hypersensitivity to any component of this drug, in patients with narrow-angle glaucoma, and in patients with suspicious, undiagnosed skin lesions or a history of melanoma.

The most common adverse reactions reported with carbidopa-levodopa therapy have included dyskinesias, such as choreiform, dystonic, and other involuntary movements, and nausea. Other side effects may include mental disturbances and symptoms resembling neuroleptic malignant syndrome. Individualize therapy to reduce adverse reactions.

Parcopa should be used with caution in patients with severe cardiovascular or pulmonary disease, bronchial asthma, renal, hepatic or endocrine disease, and in patients with a history of myocardial infarction or peptic ulcer.

Each 25/100 mg orally disintegrating tablet contains phenylalanine 3.4 mg; each 10/100 mg orally disintegrating tablet contains phenylalanine 3.4 mg; and each 25/250 mg orally disintegrating tablet contains phenylalanine 8.4 mg.

When patients are receiving levodopa without a decarboxylase inhibitor, levodopa must be discontinued at least twelve hours before Parcopa is started.

Sinemet® is a registered trademark of Merck & Co., Inc.

SCHWARZ PHARMA

For more information concerning Parcopa or other SCHWARZ PHARMA products, please call the company at 1-800-558-5114, or visit the company's Web site at www.parcopa.com.

References:

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2. Atkinson MJ *et al. Health Qual. Life Outcomes* 2004; 2:12.
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