Summary of Product Characteristics

1 NAME OF THE MEDICINAL PRODUCT

Clarithromycin 500 mg Powder for concentrate for solution for infusion

2 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE COMPOSITION

Each vial contains 500 mg of clarithromycin (as clarithromycin lactobionate).

After reconstitution in 10 mL of water for injection, reconstituted solution contains 50 mg/mL of clarithromycin (as clarithromycin lactobionate).

This medicinal product contains less than 1 mmol sodium (23 mg) per vial, i.e. essentially 'sodium-free'.

For the full list of excipients, see section 6.1.

3 PHARMACEUTICAL FORM

Powder for concentrate for solution for infusion.

White or almost white, crystalline lyophilized powder to be reconstituted and further diluted before intravenous (IV) administration.

4 CLINICAL PARTICULARS

4.1 Therapeutic indications

Clarithromycin 500 mg Powder for concentrate for solution for infusion is indicated for the treatment of the following infections in adults and children 12 years and older.

Clarithromycin 500 mg Powder for concentrate for solution for infusion is indicated whenever parenteral therapy is required for treatment of infections caused by susceptible organisms (see section 5.1) in the following conditions:

- Bacterial pharyngitis
- Acute bacterial sinusitis
- Acute bacterial exacerbation of chronic bronchitis
- Mild to moderate community acquired pneumonia
- Skin and soft tissue infections (e.g. folliculitis, cellulitis, erysipelas) (see section 4.4 and 5.1 regarding Sensitivity Testing).

Consideration should be given to official guidance on the appropriate use of antibacterial agents.

4.2 Posology and method of administration

For intravenous administration only.

Intravenous therapy may be given for 2 to 5 days in the very ill patient and should be changed to oral clarithromycin therapy whenever possible as determined by the physician.

After reconstitution the solution should be clear.

Adults: The recommended dosage of Clarithromycin 500 mg Powder for concentrate for solution for infusion is 1.0 gram daily, divided into two 500mg doses, appropriately diluted as described below.

Children 12 years and above: As for adults.

Children under 12 years: Use of Clarithromycin 500 mg Powder for concentrate for solution for infusion is not recommended for children younger than 12 years. Use clarithromycin Paediatric Suspension.

Elderly: As for adults.

Renal Impairment: In patients with renal impairment who have creatinine clearance less than 30mL/min, the dosage of clarithromycin should be reduced to one half of the normal recommended dose.

Method of administration

Clarithromycin 500 mg Powder for concentrate for solution for infusionshould be administered into one of the larger proximal veins as an IV infusion over 60 minutes, using a solution concentration of about 2mg/mL.

Clarithromycin should not be given as a bolus or an intramuscular injection.

For instructions on reconstitution and further dilution of the medicinal product before administration, see section 6.6.

4.3 Contraindications

Hypersensitivity to macrolide antibiotic drugs or to any of its excipients (see section 6.1).

Concomitant administration of clarithromycin and ergot alkaloids (e.g. ergotamine or dihydroergotamine) is contraindicated, as this may result in ergot toxicity (see section 4.5).

Concomitant administration of clarithromycin and oral midazolam is contraindicated (see section 4.5).

Concomitant administration of clarithromycin and any of the following drugs is contraindicated: astemizole, cisapride, pimozide and terfenadine as this may result in QT prolongation and cardiac arrhythmias, including ventricular tachycardia, ventricular fibrillation, and torsades de pointes (see section 4.5).

Clarithromycin should not be given to patients with history of QT prolongation (congenital or documented acquired QT prolongation) or ventricular cardiac arrhythmia, including torsades de pointes (see sections 4.4 and 4.5).

Concomitant administration with ticagrelor or ranolazine is contraindicated.

Clarithromycin should not be used concomitantly with HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors (statins) that are extensively metabolized by CYP3A4, (lovastatin or simvastatin), due to the increased risk of myopathy, including rhabdomyolysis (see section 4.5).

Concomitant administration of clarithromycin and lomitapide is contraindicated (see section 4.5).

As with other strong CYP3A4 inhibitors, clarithromycin should not be used in patients taking colchicine (see sections 4.4 and 4.5).

Clarithromycin should not be given to patients with electrolyte disturbances (hypokalaemia or hypomagnesaemia, due to the risk of prolongation of the QT interval).

Clarithromycin should not be used in patients who suffer from severe hepatic failure in combination with renal impairment.

4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use

Pregnancy
The physician should not prescribe clarithromycin to pregnant women without carefully weighing the benefits against risk, particularly during the first three months of pregnancy (see section 4.6).

Renal impairment
Caution is advised in patients with severe renal insufficiency (see section 4.2). Caution should also be exercised when administering clarithromycin to patients with moderate to severe renal impairment.

Clarithromycin is principally excreted by the liver. Therefore, caution should be exercised in administering this antibiotic to patients with impaired hepatic function.

Hepatic impairment

Cases of fatal hepatic failure (see section 4.8) have been reported. Some patients may have had pre-existing hepatic disease or may have been taking other hepatotoxic medicinal products. Patients should be advised to stop treatment and contact their doctor if signs and symptoms of hepatic disease develop, such as anorexia, jaundice, dark urine, pruritus, or tender abdomen.

Antibiotic-associated diarrhea and colitis

Pseudomembranous colitis has been reported with nearly all antibacterial agents, including macrolides, and may range in severity from mild to life-threatening. *Clostridium difficile*- associated diarrhoea (CDAD) has been reported with use of nearly all antibacterial agents including clarithromycin, and may range in severity from mild diarrhoea to fatal colitis. Treatment with antibacterial agents alters the normal flora of the colon, which may lead to overgrowth of *C. difficile.* CDAD must be considered in all patients who present with diarrhoea following antibiotic use. Careful medical history is necessary since CDAD has been reported to occur over two months after the administration of antibacterial agents. Therefore, discontinuation of clarithromycin therapy should be considered regardless of the indication.

Microbial testing should be performed and adequate treatment initiated. Drugs inhibiting peristalsis should be avoided.

Interactions with medicinal products

There have been post-marketing reports of colchicine toxicity with concomitant use of clarithromycin and colchicine, especially in the elderly, some of which occurred in patients with renal insufficiency. Deaths have been reported in some such patients (see section 4.5). Concomitant administration of clarithromycin and colchicine is contraindicated (see section 4.3).

Caution is advised regarding concomitant administration of clarithromycin and triazolobenzodiazepines, such as triazolam, and intravenous or oromucosal midazolam (see section 4.5).

Clarithromycin should be used with caution when administered concurrently with medications that induce the cytochrome CYP3A4 enzyme (see section 4.5).

Cardiovascular Events

Prolonged cardiac repolarisation and QT interval, imparting a risk of developing cardiac arrhythmia and *torsades de pointes,* have been seen in treatment with macrolides including clarithromycin (see section 4.8).

Therefore as the following situations may lead to an increased risk for ventricular arrhythmias (including *torsade de pointes),* clarithromycin should be used with caution in the following patients:

- Patients with coronary artery disease, severe cardiac insufficiency, conduction disturbances or clinically relevant bradycardia.
- Patients concomitantly taking other medicinal products associated with QT prolongation (see section 4.5).
- Concomitant administration of clarithromycin with astemizole, cisapride, pimozide and terfenadine is contraindicated (see section 4.3).
- Clarithromycin must not be used in patients with congenital or documented acquired QT prolongation or history of ventricular arrhythmia (see section 4.3).

Epidemiological studies investigating the risk of adverse cardiovascular outcomes with macrolides have shown variable results. Some observational studies have identified a rare short- term risk of arrhythmia, myocardial infarction and cardiovascular mortality associated with macrolides including clarithromycin. Consideration of these findings should be balanced with treatment benefits when prescribing clarithromycin.

Pneumonia

In view of the emerging resistance of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* to macrolides, it is important that sensitivity testing be performed whenprescribing clarithromycin for community-acquired pneumonia. In hospital-acquiredpneumonia, clarithromycin should be used in combination withadditional appropriate antibiotics.

Skin and soft tissue infections of mild to moderate severity

These infections are most often caused by *Staphylococcus aureus* and *Streptococcus pyogenes*, both of which may be resistant to macrolides. Therefore, it is important that sensitivity testing be performed. In cases where *beta*–lactam antibiotics cannot be used (e.g. allergy), other antibiotics, such as clindamycin, may be the drug of first choice. Currently, macrolides are only considered to play a role in some skin and soft tissue infections, such as those caused by *Corynebacterium minutissimum*, acne vulgaris, and erysipelas and in situations where penicillin treatment cannot be used.

Hypersensitivity
In the event of severe acute hypersensitivity reactions, such as anaphylaxis, severe cutaneous adverse reactions (SCAR) (e.g. Acute generalised exanthematous pustulosis (AGEP), Stevens-Johnson Syndrome, toxic epidermal necrolysis and DRESS clarithromycin therapy should be discontinued immediately and appropriate treatment should be urgently initiated.

HMG-CoA Reductase Inhibitors (statins)
Concomitant use of clarithromycin with lovastatin or simvastatin is contraindicated (see section 4.3). Caution should be exercised when prescribing clarithromycin with other statins. Rhabdomyolysis has been reported in patients taking clarithromycin and statins. Patients should be monitored for signs and symptoms of myopathy.

In situations where the concomitant use of clarithromycin with statins cannot be avoided, it is recommended to prescribe the lowest registered dose of the statin. Use of a statin that is not dependent on CYP3A metabolism (e.g. fluvastatin) can be considered (See section 4.5).

Oral hypoglycaemic agents/Insulin
The concomitant use of clarithromycin and oral hypoglycaemic agents (such as sulphonylurias) and/or insulin can result in significant hypoglycaemia. Careful monitoring of glucose is recommended (see section 4.5).

Oral anticoagulants
There is a risk of serious haemorrhage and significant elevations in International Normalized Ratio (INR) and prothrombin time when clarithromycin is co-administered with warfarin (see section 4.5). INR and prothrombin times should be frequently monitored while patients are receiving clarithromycin and oral anticoagulants concurrently.
Caution should be exercised when clarithromycin is co-administered with direct acting oral anticoagulants such as dabigatran, rivaroxaban and apixaban, particularly to patients at high risk of bleeding (see section 4.5).

Superinfection/Resistance
Long-term use may, as with other antibiotics, result in colonisation with increased numbers of non-susceptible bacteria and fungi. If superinfections occur, appropriate therapy should be instituted.

Attention should also be paid to the possibility of cross resistance between clarithromycin and other macrolide drugs, as well as lincomycin and clindamycin.

Excipients
This medicinal product contains less than 1 mmol sodium (23 mg) per vial, i.e. essentially 'sodium-free'.

4.5 Interaction with other medicinal products and other forms of interaction

The use of the following drugs is strictly contraindicated due to the potential for severe drug interaction effects:

Cisapride, pimozide, astemizole and terfenadine:
Elevated cisapride levels have been reported in patients receiving clarithromycin and cisapride concomitantly. This may result in QT prolongation and cardiac arrhythmias including ventricular tachycardia, ventricular fibrillation and torsades de pointes. Similar effects have been observed in patients taking clarithromycin and pimozide concomitantly (see section 4.3).

Macrolides have been reported to alter the metabolism of terfenadine resulting in increased levels of terfenadine which has occasionally been associated with cardiac arrhythmias, such as QT prolongation, ventricular tachycardia, ventricular fibrillation and torsades de pointes (see section 4.3). In one study in 14 healthy volunteers, the concomitant administration of clarithromycin and terfenadine resulted in 2- to 3-fold increase in the serum level of the acid metabolite of terfenadine and in prolongation of the QT interval which did not lead to any clinically detectable effect. Similar effects have been observed with concomitant administration of astemizole and other macrolides.

Ergot alkaloids:
Post-marketing reports indicate that co-administration of clarithromycin with ergotamine or dihydroergotamine has been associated with acute ergot toxicity characterized by vasospasm, and ischaemia of the extremities and other tissues including the central nervous system. Concomitant administration of clarithromycin and ergot alkaloids is contraindicated (see section 4.3).

Oral Midazolam

When midazolam was co-administered with clarithromycin tablets (500 mg twice daily), midazolam AUC was increased 7-fold after oral administration of midazolam. Concomitant administration of oral midazolam and clarithromycin is contraindicated.

HMG-CoA Reductase Inhibitors (statins)
Concomitant use of clarithromycin with lovastatin or simvastatin is contraindicated (see 4.3) as these statins are extensively metabolized by CYP3A4 and concomitant treatment with clarithromycin increases their plasma concentration, which increases the risk of myopathy, including rhabdomyolysis. Reports of rhabdomyolysis have been received for patients taking clarithromycin concomitantly with these statins. If treatment with clarithromycin cannot be avoided, therapy with lovastatin or simvastatin must be suspended during the course of treatment.

Caution should be exercised when prescribing clarithromycin with statins. In situations where the concomitant use of clarithromycin with statins cannot be avoided, it is recommended to prescribe the lowest registered dose of the statin. Use of a statin that is not dependent on CYP3A metabolism (e.g. fluvastatin) can be considered. Patients should be monitored for signs and symptoms of myopathy.

Effects of Other Medicinal Products on Clarithromycin

Drugs that are inducers of CYP3A (e.g. rifampicin, phenytoin, carbamazepine, phenobarbital, St John's wort) may induce the metabolism of clarithromycin.

This may result in sub-therapeutic levels of clarithromycin leading to reduced efficacy. Furthermore, it might be necessary to monitor the plasma levels of the CYP3A inducer, which could be increased owing to the inhibition of CYP3A by clarithromycin (see also the relevant product information for the CYP3A4 inhibitor administered). Concomitant administration of rifabutin and clarithromycin resulted in an increase in rifabutin, and decrease in clarithromycin serum levels together with an increased risk of uveitis.

The following drugs are known or suspected to affect circulating concentrations of clarithromycin; clarithromycin dosage adjustment or consideration of alternative treatments may be required.

Efavirenz, nevirapine, rifampicin, rifabutin and rifapentine
Strong inducers of the cytochrome P450 metabolism system such as efavirenz, nevirapine, rifampicin, rifabutin, and rifapentine may accelerate the metabolism of clarithromycin and thus lower the plasma levels of clarithromycin, while increasing those of 14-OH clarithromycin, a metabolite that is also microbiologically active. Since the microbiological activities of clarithromycin and 14-OH-clarithromycin are different for different bacteria, the intended therapeutic effect could be impaired during concomitant administration of clarithromycin and enzyme inducers.

Etravirine
Clarithromycin exposure was decreased by etravirine; however, concentrations of the active metabolite, 14-OH-clarithromycin, were increased. Because 14- OH-clarithromycin has reduced activity against Mycobacterium avium complex (MAC), overall activity against this pathogen may be altered; therefore, alternatives to clarithromycin should be considered for the treatment of MAC.

Fluconazole
Concomitant administration of fluconazole 200 mg daily and clarithromycin 500 mg twice daily to 21 healthy volunteers led to increases in the mean steady-state minimum clarithromycin concentration (Cmin) and area under the curve (AUC) of 33% and 18% respectively. Steady state concentrations of the active metabolite 14 OH-clarithromycin were not significantly affected by concomitant administration of fluconazole. No clarithromycin dose adjustment is necessary.

Ritonavir
A pharmacokinetic study demonstrated that the concomitant administration of ritonavir 200 mg every eight hours and clarithromycin 500 mg every 12 hours resulted in a marked inhibition of the metabolism of clarithromycin. The clarithromycin Cmax increased by 31%, Cmin increased 182% and AUC increased by 77% with concomitant administration of ritonavir. An essentially complete inhibition of the formation of 14-OH-clarithromycin was noted.

Because of the large therapeutic window for clarithromycin, no dosage reduction should be necessary in patients with normal renal function.

However, for patients with renal impairment, the following dosage adjustments should be considered: For patients with CL_{CR} 30 to 60 mL/min the dose of clarithromycin should be reduced by 50%. For patients with CL_{CR} <30 mL/min the dose of

clarithromycin should be decreased by 75%. Doses of clarithromycin greater than 1 g/day should not be co-administered with ritonavir.

Similar dose adjustments should be considered in patients with reduced renal function when ritonavir is used as a pharmacokinetic enhancer with other HIV protease inhibitors including atazanavir and saquinavir (see section below, Bi-directional drug interactions).

Effect of Clarithromycin on Other Medicinal Products

CYP3A-based interactions
Co-administration of clarithromycin, known to inhibit CYP3A, and a drug primarily metabolised by CYP3A may be associated with elevations in drug concentrations that could increase or prolong both therapeutic and adverse effects of the concomitant drug. Clarithromycin should be used with caution in patients receiving treatment with other drugs known to be CYP3A enzyme substrates, especially if the CYP3A substrate has a narrow safety margin (e.g. carbamazepine) and/or the substrate is extensively metabolised by this enzyme.

Dosage adjustments may be considered, and when possible, serum concentrations of drugs primarily metabolised by CYP3A should be monitored closely in patients concurrently receiving clarithromycin.

Concomitant administration of clarithromycin with lomitapide is contraindicated due to the potential for markedly increased transaminases (see section 4.3).

The following drugs or drug classes are known or suspected to be metabolised by the same CYP3A isozyme: alprazolam, astemizole, carbamazepine, cilostazol, cisapride, ciclosporin, disopyramide, ergot alkaloids, lovastatin, methylprednisolone, midazolam, omeprazole, oral anticoagulants (e.g. warfarin, rivaroxaban, apixaban, see 4.4), atypical antipsychotics (e.g. quetiapine), pimozide, quinidine, rifabutin, sildenafil, simvastatin, sirolimus, tacrolimus, terfenadine, triazolam and vinblastine but this list is not exhaustive. Drugs interacting by similar mechanisms through other isozymes within the cytochrome P450 system include phenytoin, theophylline and valproate.

Antiarrhythmics
There have been post-marketed reports of torsades de pointes occurring with the concurrent use of clarithromycin and quinidine or disopyramide. Electrocardiograms should be monitored for QT prolongation during co-administration of clarithromycin with these drugs. Serum levels of quinidine and disopyramide should be monitored during clarithromycin therapy.

There have been post marketing reports of hypoglycemia with the concomitant administration of clarithromycin and disopyramide. Therefore, blood glucose levels should be monitored during concomitant administration of clarithromycin and disopyramide.

Oral hypoglycemic agents/Insulin
With certain hypoglycemic drugs such as nateglinide, and repaglinide, inhibition of CYP3A enzyme by clarithromycin may be involved and could cause hypolgycemia when used concomitantly. Careful monitoring of glucose is recommended.

Direct acting oral anticoagulants (DOACs)
The DOAC dabigatran is a substrate for the efflux transporter P-gp. Rivaroxaban and apixaban are metabolised via CYP3A4 and are also substrates for P-gp. Caution should be exercised when clarithromycin is co-administered with these agents particularly to patients at high risk of bleeding (see section 4.4).

Omeprazole
Clarithromycin (500 mg every 8 hours) was given in combination with omeprazole (40 mg daily) to healthy adult subjects. The steady-state plasma concentrations of omeprazole were increased (Cmax, AUC_{0-24}, and $t_{1/2}$ increased by 30%, 89%, and 34%, respectively), by the concomitant administration of clarithromycin. The mean 24-hour gastric pH value was 5.2 when omeprazole was administered alone and 5.7 when omeprazole was co-administered with clarithromycin.

Sildenafil, tadalafil and vardenafil
Each of these phosphodiesterase inhibitors is metabolised, at least in part, by CYP3A, and CYP3A may be inhibited by concomitantly administered clarithromycin. Co administration of clarithromycin with sildenafil, tadalafil or vardenafil would likely result in increased phosphodiesterase inhibitor exposure. Reduction of sildenafil, tadalafil and vardenafil dosages should be considered when these drugs are co administered with clarithromycin.

Theophylline, carbamazepine
Results of clinical studies indicate that there was a modest but statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$) increase of circulating theophylline or carbamazepine levels when either of these drugs were administered concomitantly with clarithromycin. Dose reduction may need to be considered.

Tolterodine
The primary route of metabolism for tolterodine is via the 2D6 isoform of cytochrome P450 (CYP2D6). However, in a subset of the population devoid of CYP2D6, the identified pathway of metabolism is via CYP3A. In this population subset, inhibition of CYP3A results in significantly higher serum concentrations of tolterodine. A reduction in tolterodine dosage may be necessary in the presence of CYP3A inhibitors, such as clarithromycin in the CYP2D6 poor metaboliser population.

Triazolobenzodiazepines (e.g., alprazolam, midazolam, triazolam)
When midazolam was co-administered with clarithromycin tablets (500 mg twice daily), midazolam AUC was increased 2.7-fold after intravenous administration of midazolam. If intravenous midazolam is co-administered with clarithromycin, the patient must be closely monitored to allow dose adjustment. Drug delivery of midazolam via oromucosal route, which could bypass pre-systemic elimination of the drug, will likely result in a similar interaction to that observed after intravenous midazolam rather than oral administration. The same precautions should also apply to other benzodiazepines that are metabolised by CYP3A, including triazolam and alprazolam. For benzodiazepines which are not dependent on CYP3A for their elimination (temazepam, nitrazepam, lorazepam), a clinically important interaction with clarithromycin is unlikely.

There have been post-marketing reports of drug interactions and central nervous system (CNS) effects (e.g., somnolence and confusion) with the concomitant use of clarithromycin and triazolam. Monitoring the patient for increased CNS pharmacological effects is suggested.

Other drug interactions

Colchicine
Colchicine is a substrate for both CYP3A and the efflux transporter, P-glycoprotein (Pgp). Clarithromycin and other macrolides are known to inhibit CYP3A and Pgp. When clarithromycin and colchicine are administered together, inhibition of Pgp and/or CYP3A by clarithromycin may lead to increased exposure to colchicine (see section 4.3 and 4.4).

Digoxin
Digoxin is thought to be a substrate for the efflux transporter, P-glycoprotein (Pgp). Clarithromycin is known to inhibit Pgp. When clarithromycin and digoxin are administered together, inhibition of Pgp by clarithromycin may lead to increased exposure to digoxin. Elevated digoxin serum concentrations in patients receiving clarithromycin and digoxin concomitantly have also been reported in post marketing surveillance. Some patients have shown clinical signs consistent with digoxin toxicity, including potentially fatal arrhythmias.

Serum digoxin concentrations should be carefully monitored while patients are receiving digoxin and clarithromycin simultaneously.

Zidovudine
Simultaneous oral administration of clarithromycin tablets and zidovudine to HIV-infected adult patients may result in decreased steady-state zidovudine concentrations. Because clarithromycin appears to interfere with the absorption of simultaneously administered oral zidovudine, this interaction can be largely avoided by staggering the doses of clarithromycin and zidovudine to allow for a 4-hour interval between each medication. This interaction does not appear to occur in paediatric HIV-infected patients taking clarithromycin suspension with zidovudine or dideoxyinosine. This interaction is unlikely when clarithromycin is administered via intravenous infusion.

Phenytoin and Valproate
There have been spontaneous or published reports of interactions of CYP3A inhibitors, including clarithromycin with drugs not thought to be metabolised by CYP3A (e.g. phenytoin and valproate). Serum level determinations are recommended for these drugs when administered concomitantly with clarithromycin. Increased serum levels have been reported.

Bi-directional drug interactions

Atazanavir

Both clarithromycin and atazanavir are substrates and inhibitors of CYP3A, and there is evidence of a bi-directional drug interaction. Co-administration of clarithromycin (500 mg twice daily) with atazanavir (400 mg once daily) resulted in a 2-fold increase in exposure to clarithromycin and a 70% decrease in exposure to 14-OH clarithromycin, with a 28% increase in the AUC of atazanavir. Because of the large therapeutic window for clarithromycin, no dosage reduction should be necessary in patients with normal renal function.

For patients with moderate renal function (creatinine clearance 30 to 60 mL/min), the dose of clarithromycin should be decreased by 50%. For patients with creatinine clearance <30 mL/min, the dose of clarithromycin should be decreased by 75% using an appropriate clarithromycin formulation.

Doses of clarithromycin greater than 1000 mg per day should not be coadministered with protease inhibitors.

Calcium Channel Blockers
Caution is advised regarding the concomitant administration of clarithromycin and calcium channel blockers metabolized by CYP3A4 (e.g. verapamil, amlodipine, diltiazem) due to the risk of hypotension. Plasma concentrations of clarithromycin as well as calcium channel blockers may increase due to the interaction. Hypotension, bradyarrhythmias and lactic acidosis have been observed in patients taking clarithromycin and verapamil concomitantly.

Itraconazole
Both clarithromycin and itraconazole are substrates and inhibitors of CYP3A, leading to a bidirectional drug interaction. Clarithromycin may increase the plasma levels of itraconazole, while itraconazole may increase the plasma levels of clarithromycin. Patients taking itraconazole and clarithromycin concomitantly should be monitored closely for signs or symptoms of increased or prolonged pharmacologic effect.

Saquinavir
Both clarithromycin and saquinavir are substrates and inhibitors of CYP3A, and there is evidence of a bi-directional drug interaction. Concomitant administration of clarithromycin (500 mg twice daily) and saquinavir (soft gelatin capsules, 1200 mg three times daily) to 12 healthy volunteers resulted in steady-state AUC and C_{max} values of saquinavir which were 177% and 187% higher than those seen with saquinavir alone. Clarithromycin AUC and C_{max} values were approximately 40% higher than those seen with clarithromycin alone. No dose adjustment is required when the two drugs are co-administered for a limited time at the doses/formulations studied. Observations from drug interaction studies using the soft gelatin capsule formulation may not be representative of the effects seen using the saquinavir hard gelatin capsule. Observations from drug interaction studies performed with saquinavir alone may not be representative of the effects seen with saquinavir/ritonavir therapy. When saquinavir is co-administered with ritonavir, consideration should be given to the potential effects of ritonavir on clarithromycin (see section 4.5: Ritonavir).

4.6 Fertility, pregnancy and lactation

Pregnancy

The safety of clarithromycin for use during pregnancy has not been established. Based on variable results obtained from animal studies, and experience in humans, the possibility of adverse effects on embryofoetal development cannot be excluded. Some observational studies evaluating exposure to clarithromycin during the first and second trimester have reported an increased risk of miscarriage compared to no antibiotic use or other antibiotic use during the same period. The available epidemiological studies on the risk of major congenital malformations with use of macrolides including clarithromycin during pregnancy provide conflicting results.
Therefore, use during pregnancy is not advised without carefully weighing the benefits against risks.

Breastfeeding

The safety of clarithromycin for using during breast-feeding of infants has not been established. Clarithromycin is excreted into human breast milk in small amounts. It has been estimated that an exclusively breastfed infant would receive about 1.7% of the maternal weight-adjusted dose of clarithromycin.

4.7 Effects on ability to drive and use machines

There are no data on the effect of clarithromycin on the ability to drive or use machines. The potential for dizziness, vertigo, confusion and disorientation, which may occur with the medication, should be taken into account before patients drive or use machines.

4.8 Undesirable effects

a. Summary of the safety profile

The most frequent and common adverse reactions related to clarithromycin therapy for both adult and paediatric populations are abdominal pain, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting and taste perversion. These adverse reactions are usually mild in intensity and are consistent with the known safety profile of macrolide antibiotics (see section b of section 4.8).

There was no significant difference in the incidence of these gastrointestinal adverse reactions during clinical trials between the patient population with or without pre-existing mycobacterial infections.

b. Tabulated summary of adverse reactions

The following table displays adverse reactions reported in clinical trials and from post-marketing experience with clarithromycin immediate-release tablets, granules for oral suspension, powder for solution for injection, extended-release tablets and modified-release tablets.

The reactions considered at least possibly related to clarithromycin are displayed by system organ class and frequency using the following convention: very common (≥1/10), common (≥ 1/100 to < 1/10), uncommon (≥1/1,000 to < 1/100) and not known (adverse reactions from post-marketing experience; cannot be estimated from the available data). Within each frequency grouping, adverse reactions are presented in order of decreasing seriousness when the seriousness could be assessed.

System Organ Class	Very common ≥1/10	Common ≥ 1/100 to < 1/10	Uncommon ≥1/1,000 to < 1/100	Not Known* (cannot be estimated from the available data)
Infections and infestations			Cellulitis[1], candidiasis, gastroenteritis[2], infection[3], vaginal infection	Pseudomembranous colitis, erysipelas,
Blood and lymphatic system disorders			Leukopenia, neutropenia[4], thrombocythaemia[3], eosinophilia[4]	Agranulocytosis, thrombocytopenia
Immune system disorders			Anaphylactoid reaction[1], hypersensitivity	Anaphylactic reaction. angioedema
Metabolism and nutrition disorders			Anorexia, decreased appetite	
Psychiatric disorders		Insomnia	Anxiety, nervousness[3]	Psychotic disorder, confusional state[5], depersonalisation, depression, disorientation, hallucination, abnormal dreams, mania
Nervous system disorders		Dysgeusia, headache, taste perversion	Loss of consciousness[1], dyskinesia[1], dizziness, somnolence[5], tremor	Convulsion, ageusia, parosmia, anosmia, paraesthesia
Ear and labyrinth disorders			Vertigo, hearing impaired, tinnitus	Deafness
Cardiac disorders			Cardiac arrest[1], atrial fibrillation[1], electrocardiogram QT prolonged, extrasystoles[1], palpitations	Torsades de pointes, ventricular tachycardia,

				ventricular fibrillation
Vascular disorders		Vasodilation[1]		Haemorrhage
Respiratory, thoracic and mediastinal disorder			Asthma[1], epistaxis[2], pulmonary embolism[1]	
Gastrointestinal disorders		Diarrhoea, vomiting, dyspepsia, nausea, abdominal pain	Oesophagitis[1], gastrooesophageal reflux disease[2], gastritis, proctalgia[2], stomatitis, glossitis, abdominal distension[4], constipation, dry mouth, eructation, flatulence,	Pancreatitis acute, tongue discolouration, tooth discolouration
Hepatobiliary disorders		Liver function test abnormal	Cholestasis[4], hepatitis[4], alanine aminotransferase increased, aspartate aminotransferase increased, gamma-glutamyltransferase increased[4]	Hepatic failure, jaundice hepatocellular
Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders		Rash, hyperhidrosis	Dermatitis bullous[1], pruritus, urticaria, rash maculo-papular[3]	Stevens-Johnson syndrome, toxic epidermal necrolysis, drug rash with eosinophilia and systemic symptoms (DRESS), acne, acute generalised exanthematous pustulosis (AGEP)
Musculoskeletal and Connective tissue disorders			Muscle spasms[3], musculoskeletal stiffness[1], myalgia[2]	Rhabdomyolysis[2,6], myopathy
Renal and urinary disorders			Blood creatinine increased[1], blood urea increased[1]	Renal failure, nephritis interstitial
General disorders and administration site conditions	Injection site phlebitis[1]	Injection site pain[1], injection site inflammation[1]	Malaise[4], pyrexia[3], asthenia, chest pain[4], chills[4], fatigue[4]	
Investigations			Albumin globulin ratio abnormal[1], blood alkaline phosphatase increased[4], blood lactate dehydrogenase increased[4]	International normalised ratio increased, prothrombin time prolonged, urine colour abnormal

[1] ADRs reported only for the Powder for Solution for Injection formulation
[2]ADRs reported only for the Extended-Release Tablets formulation
[3] ADRs reported only for the Granules for Oral Suspension formulation
[4] ADRs reported only for the Immediate-Release Tablets formulation
[5, 6] See section c

** Because these reactions are reported voluntarily from a population of uncertain size, it is not always possible to reliably estimate their frequency or establish a causal relationship to drug exposure. Patient exposure is estimated to be greater than 1 billion patient treatment days for clarithromycin.*

c. Description of selected adverse reactions

Injection site phlebitis, injection site pain, and injection site inflammation are specific to the clarithromycin intravenous formulation.

In some of the reports of rhabdomyolysis, clarithromycin was administered concomitantly with statins, fibrates, colchicine or allopurinol (see section 4.3 and 4.4).

There have been post-marketing reports of drug interactions and central nervous system (CNS) effects (e.g. somnolence and confusion) with the concomitant use of clarithromycin and triazolam. Monitoring the patient for increased CNS pharmacological effects is suggested (see section 4.5).

There have been rare reports of clarithromycin ER tablets in the stool, many of which have occurred in patients with anatomic (including ileostomy or colostomy) or functional gastrointestinal disorders with shortened GI transit times. In several reports, tablet residues have occurred in the context of diarrhoea. It is recommended that patients who experience tablet residue in the stool and no improvement in their condition should be switched to a different clarithromycin formulation (e.g. suspension) or another antibiotic.

Special population: Adverse Reactions in Immunocompromised Patients (see section e).

d. Paediatric populations

Clinical trials have been conducted using clarithromycin paediatric suspension in children 6 months to 12 years of age. Therefore, children under 12 years of age should use clarithromycin paediatric suspension.

Frequency, type and severity of adverse reactions in children are expected to be the same as in adults.

e. Other special populations

Immunocompromised patients

In AIDS and other immunocompromised patients treated with the higher doses of clarithromycin over long periods of time for mycobacterial infections, it was often difficult to distinguish adverse events possibly associated with clarithromycin administration from underlying signs of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) disease or intercurrent illness.

In adult patients, the most frequently reported adverse reactions by patients treated with total daily doses of 1000 mg and 2000mg of clarithromycin were: nausea, vomiting, taste perversion, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, rash, flatulence, headache, constipation, hearing disturbance, Serum Glutamic Oxaloacetic Transaminase (SGOT) and Serum Glutamic Pyruvate Transaminase (SGPT) elevations. Additional low-frequency events included dyspnoea, insomnia and dry mouth. The incidences were comparable for patients treated with 1000mg and 2000mg, but were generally about 3 to 4 times as frequent for those patients who received total daily doses of 4000mg of clarithromycin.

In these immunocompromised patients, evaluations of laboratory values were made by analysing those values outside the seriously abnormal level (i.e. the extreme high or low limit) for the specified test. On the basis of these criteria, about 2% to 3% of those patients who received 1000mg or 2000mg of clarithromycin daily had seriously abnormal elevated levels of SGOT and SGPT, and abnormally low white blood cell and platelet counts.
A lower percentage of patients in these two dosage groups also had elevated Blood Urea Nitrogen levels. Slightly higher incidences of abnormal values were noted for patients who received 4000mg daily for all parameters except White Blood Cell.

Reporting of suspected adverse reactions
Reporting suspected adverse reactions after authorisation of the medicinal product is important. It allows continued monitoring of the benefit/risk balance of the medicinal product. Healthcare professionals are asked to report any suspected adverse reactions via HPRA Pharmacovigilance, Earlsfort Terrace, IRL - Dublin 2, Tel: +353 1 6764971, Fax: +353 1 6762517, Website: www.hpra.ie, E-mail: medsafety@hpra.ie.

4.9 Overdose

Reports indicate that the ingestion of large amounts of clarithromycin orally can be expected to produce gastro-intestinal symptoms. One patient who had a history of bipolar disorder ingested 8 grams of clarithromycin and showed altered mental status, paranoid behaviour, hypokalaemia and hypoxaemia.

Adverse reactions accompanying overdosage should be treated by the prompt elimination of unabsorbed drug and supportive measures. As with other macrolides, clarithromycin serum levels are not expected to be appreciably affected by haemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis.

In the case of overdosage, Clarithromycin 500 mg Powder for concentrate for solution for infusion should be discontinued and all other appropriate supportive measures should be instituted.

5 PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES

5.1 Pharmacodynamic properties

ATC Classification:
Pharmacotherapeutic group: Antibacterial for systemic use, macrolide
ATC-Code: J01FA09

Mechanism of action:
Clarithromycin is an antibiotic belonging to the macrolide antibiotic group. It exerts its antibacterial action by selectively binding to the 50s ribosomal subunit of susceptible bacteria preventing translocation of activated amino acids.
It inhibits the intracellular protein synthesis of susceptible bacteria.

The 14-hydroxy metabolite of clarithromycin, a product of parent drug metabolism also has anti-microbial activity. The metabolite is less active than the parent compound for most organisms, including mycobacterium spp. An exception is Haemophilus influenza where the 14-hydroxy metabolite is twofold more active than the parent compound.

Breakpoints

The following breakpoints have been established by the European Committee for Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (EUCAST) Clinical MIC Breakpoints (Version 8.1, valid from 2018-05-15).

Breakpoints (MIC, mg/L)		
Microorganism	Susceptible (≤)	Resistant (>)
Staphylococcus spp.[1)]	1	2
Streptococcus spp.(groups A, B, C and G)[1)]	0.25	0.5
Streptococcus pneumonia [1)]	0.25	0.5
Moraxella catarrhalis [1)]	0.25	0.5
Helicobacter pylori[2)]	0.25	0.5
Kingella kingae[1)]	0.5	0.5
Haemophilus influenzae[3)]	Note	Note

1. Erythromycin can be used to determine susceptibility to clarithromycin
2. The breakpoints are based on epidemiological cut-off values (ECOFFs), which distinguish wild-type isolates from those with reduced susceptibility.
3. Clinical evidence for the efficacy of macrolides in *H. influenzae* respiratory infections is conflicting due to high spontaneous cure rates. Should there be a need to test any macrolide against this species, the epidemiological cut-offs (ECOFFs) should be used to detect strains with acquired resistance. The ECOFF for clarithromycin is 32 mg/L.

Susceptibility organisms:

Clarithromycinis usually active against the following organisms *in vitro*:

Commonly susceptible species
Gram-positive Bacteria
Staphylococcus aureus (methicillin susceptible)
Streptococcus pyogenes (Group A beta-haemolytic *streptococci*)
Alpha-haemolytic *streptococcus* (viridans group);

Streptococcus (Diplococcus) pneumoniae
Streptococcus agalactiae
Listeria monocytogenes.
Gram-negative Bacteria
Haemophilus influenzae
Haemophilus parainfluenzae
Moraxella (Branhamella) catarrhalis
Neisseria gonorrhoeae
Legionella pneumophila
Bordetella pertussis
Helicobacter pylori
Campylobacter jejuni
Mycoplasma
Mycoplasma pneumoniae
Ureaplasma urealyticum
Other Organisms
Chlamydia trachomatis
Mycobacterium avium
Mycobacterium leprae
Chlamydia pneumoniae
Anaerobes
Macrolide-susceptible *Bacteriodes fragilis*
Clostridium perfringens
Peptococcus species
Peptostreptococcus species
Propionibacterium acnes

Clarithromycin has bactericidal activity against several bacterial strains. These organisms include *H. influenzae, Streptococcus pneumoniae, Streptococcus pyogenes, Streptococcus agalactiae, Morazella (Brahamella) catarrhalis, Neisseria gonorrhoeae, Helicobacter pylori* and *Campylobacter* spp.

The activity of clarithromycin against *H. pylori* is greater at neutral pH than at acid pH.

5.2 Pharmacokinetic properties

Biotransformation
The microbiologically active metabolite 14-hydroxyclarithromycin is formed by first pass metabolism as indicated by lower biovailability of the metabolite following IV administration.

Elimination
Following a single 500mg IV dose over 60 minutes, about 33% clarithromycin and 11% 14- hydroxyclarithromycin is excreted in the urine at 24 hours.

Pharmacokinetic/pharmacodynamic relationship
Following IV administration the blood levels of clarithromycin achieved are well in excess of the MIC 90s for the common pathogens and the levels of 14-hydroxyclarithromycin exceed the necessary concentrations for important pathogens, e.g. *H. influenzae.*

Linearity/non-linearity
The pharmacokinetics of clarithromycin and the 14-hydroxy metabolite are non-linear; steady state is achieved by day 3 of IV dosing.

Clarithromycin 500 mg Powder for concentrate for solution for infusion does not contain tartrazine or other azo dyes, lactose or gluten.

5.3 Preclinical safety data

In acute toxicity studies in mouse and rat, the median lethal dose was greater than the highest feasible dose for administration (5g/kg).

In repeated dose studies, toxicity was related to dose, duration of treatment and species. Dogs were more sensitive than primates or rats. The major clinical signs at toxic doses included emesis, weakness, reduced food consumption and weight gain, salivation, dehydration and hyperactivity. In all species the liver was the primary target organ at toxic doses. Hepatotoxicity was detectable by early elevations of liver function tests. Discontinuation of the drug generally resulted in a return to or toward normal results. Other tissues less commonly affected included the stomach, thymus and other lymphoid tissues and the kidneys.

At near therapeutic doses, conjunctival injection and lacrimation occurred only in dogs. At a massive dose of 400mg/kg/day, some dogs and monkeys developed corneal opacities and/or oedema.

Fertility and reproduction studies in rats have shown no adverse effects. Teratogenicity studies in rats (Wistar (p.o.) and Sprague-Dawley (p.o. and i.v.)), New Zealand White rabbits and cynomolgous monkeys failed to demonstrate any teratogenicity from clarithromycin. However, a further similar study in Sprague-Dawley rats indicated a low (6%) incidence of cardiovascular abnormalities which appeared to be due to spontaneous expression of genetic changes. Two mouse studies revealed a variable incidence (3-30%) of cleft palate and in monkeys embryonic loss was seen but only at dose levels which were clearly toxic to the mothers.

6 PHARMACEUTICAL PARTICULARS

6.1 List of excipients

Lactobionic acid
Sodium hydroxide (*for pH adjustment*)

6.2 Incompatibilities

This medicinal product must not be mixed with other medicinal products except those mentioned in section 6.6.

After reconstitution the solution should not be further diluted with inorganic salts or solutions containing preservatives.

6.3 Shelf life

Unopened vials	36 months
After reconstitution:	Chemical and physical in-use stability has been demonstrated for 48 hours at 5±3ºC and for 24 hours (at 25±2ºC) at a final clarithromycin concentration of 50 mg/mL. From a microbiological point of view, the product should be used immediately. If not used immediately in-use storage times and conditions prior to use are the responsibility of the user and would normally not be longer than 24 h at 2° C to 8°C, unless reconstitution has taken place in controlled and validated aseptic conditions
After reconstitution and further dilution:	Chemical and physical in-use stability has been demonstrated for 6 h (at 25±2ºC) or 48 h at (5±3ºC) at a final clarithromycin concentration of 1.92 mg/mL. From a microbiological point of view, the solution for infusion should be used immediately. If not used immediately, in-use storage times and conditions prior to use are the responsibility of the user and would normally not be longer than 24 h at 2° C to 8°C, unless dilution has taken place in controlled and validated aseptic conditions.

6.4 Special precautions for storage

This medicinal product does not require any special storage conditions.

For storage conditions after reconstitution or after reconstitution and further dilution of the medicinal product, see section 6.3.

6.5 Nature and contents of container

Glass vial of 20 mL (Type I) closed with rubber (type I) closure and sealed with aluminium flip-off cap.
Vials are packed in cartons of 1, 4, 6, 10 and 50. Each vial contains 500 mg of clarithromycin (as clarithromycin lactobionate).

Not all pack sizes may be marketed.

6.6 Special precautions for disposal and other handling

Preparation of the solution for infusion is a two-step process:

Step 1 consists of preparation of the reconstituted solution

Inject 10 mL of water for injections into the vial containing the product. Shake until the vial contents have dissolved.

After reconstitution the solution should be clear.

1 mL of the vial solution prepared in this way contains 50 mg clarithromycin (as clarithromycin lactobionate). For storage conditions after reconstitution of the medicinal product see section 6.3

Do not use solutions of inorganic salts or solutions containing preservatives.

Step 2 consists of the further dilution of the reconstituted solution to a concentration suitable for infusion.

Make up 10 mL of the vial solution prepared in step A (containing 500 mg clarithromycin (as clarithromycin lactobionate)) to 250 mL using one of the following solutions: 5% dextrose in Lactated Ringer's Solution, 5% dextrose, Lactated Ringer's solution, 5% dextrose in 0.3% sodium chloride, 5% dextrose in 0.45% sodium chloride, or 0.9% sodium chloride. Compatibility with other IV additives has not been established.

1 mL of the infusion solution prepared in this way contains about 1.92 mg clarithromycin (as clarithromycin lactobionate).
Do not use:

- Solutions strengths greater than 2 mg/mL (0.2%)
- Rapid infusion rates (< 60 minutes)

Failure to observe these precautions may result in pain along the vein.
For storage conditions after dilution of the medicinal product see section 6.3

Any antibiotic residual solution as well as all materials that have been used for administration should be disposed of in accordance with local requirements.

7 MARKETING AUTHORISATION HOLDER

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9 DATE OF FIRST AUTHORISATION/RENEWAL OF THE AUTHORISATION

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10 DATE OF REVISION OF THE TEXT