

Summary of Product Characteristics

1 NAME OF THE MEDICINAL PRODUCT

Montelukast 5 mg chewable tablets

2 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE COMPOSITION

Each chewable tablet contains 5 mg montelukast (as montelukast sodium).

Excipient(s) with known effect:

Each chewable tablet contains 1.5 mg aspartame.

For the full list of excipients, see section 6.1.

3 PHARMACEUTICAL FORM

Chewable tablet

Pink, marbled, round, slightly biconvex tablets with bevelled edges and inscription 5 on one side.

4 CLINICAL PARTICULARS

4.1 Therapeutic indications

Montelukast is indicated in the treatment of asthma as add-on therapy in those patients with mild to moderate persistent asthma who are inadequately controlled on inhaled corticosteroids and in whom "as-needed" short-acting β -agonists provide inadequate clinical control of asthma.

Montelukast may also be an alternative treatment option to low-dose inhaled corticosteroids for patients with mild persistent asthma who do not have a recent history of serious asthma attacks that required oral corticosteroid use, and who have demonstrated that they are not capable of using inhaled corticosteroids (see section 4.2)

Montelukast is also indicated in the prophylaxis of asthma in which the predominant component is exercise-induced bronchoconstriction.

4.2 Posology and method of administration

Posology

The recommended dose for paediatric patients 6-14 years of age is one 5mg chewable tablet daily to be taken in the evening. If taken in connection with food, Montelukast should be taken 1 hour before or 2 hours after food. No dosage adjustment within this age group is necessary.

General recommendations

The therapeutic effect of Montelukast on parameters of asthma control occurs within one day. Patients should be advised to continue taking Montelukast even if their asthma is under control, as well as during periods of worsening asthma.

No dosage adjustment is necessary for patients with renal insufficiency, or mild to moderate hepatic impairment. There are no data on patients with severe hepatic impairment. The dosage is the same for both male and female patients.

Montelukast as an alternative treatment option to low-dose inhaled corticosteroids for mild persistent asthma

Montelukast is not recommended as monotherapy in patients with moderate persistent asthma. The use of montelukast as an alternative treatment option to low-dose inhaled corticosteroids for children with mild persistent asthma should only be considered for patients who do not have a recent history of serious asthma attacks that required oral corticosteroid use and who have demonstrated that they are not capable of using inhaled corticosteroids (see section 4.1). Mild persistent asthma is defined as asthma symptoms more than once a week but less than once a day, nocturnal symptoms more than twice a month but less than once a week, normal lung function between episodes. If satisfactory control of asthma is not achieved at

follow-up (usually within one month), the need for an additional or different anti-inflammatory therapy based on the step system for asthma therapy should be evaluated. Patients should be periodically evaluated for their asthma control.

Therapy with Montelukast in relation to other treatments for asthma

When treatment with Montelukast is used as add-on therapy to inhaled corticosteroids, Montelukast should not be abruptly substituted for inhaled corticosteroids (see section 4.4).

10 mg tablets are available for adults and adolescents 15 years of age and older.

Paediatric population

Do not give Montelukast 5 mg chewable tablets to children less than 6 years of age. The safety and efficacy of Montelukast 5 mg chewable tablets in children less than 6 years of age has not been established.

4 mg chewable tablets are available for paediatric patients 2 to 5 years of age.

Method of administration

Oral use.

The tablets are to be chewed before swallowing.

4.3 Contraindications

Hypersensitivity to the active substance or to any of the excipients listed in section 6.1.

4.4 Special warnings and precautions for use

Patients should be advised never to use oral montelukast to treat acute asthma attacks and to keep their usual appropriate rescue medication for this purpose readily available. If an acute attack occurs, a short-acting inhaled β -agonist should be used. Patients should seek their doctor's advice as soon as possible if they need more inhalations of short-acting β -agonists than usual.

Montelukast should not be abruptly substituted for inhaled or oral corticosteroids.

There are no data demonstrating that oral corticosteroids can be reduced when montelukast is given concomitantly.

In rare cases, patients on therapy with anti-asthma agents including montelukast may present with systemic eosinophilia, sometimes presenting with clinical features of vasculitis consistent with Churg-Strauss syndrome, a condition which is often treated with systemic corticosteroid therapy. These cases have been sometimes associated with the reduction or withdrawal of oral corticosteroid therapy. Although a causal relationship with leukotriene receptor antagonism has not been established, physicians should be alert to eosinophilia, vasculitic rash, worsening pulmonary symptoms, cardiac complications, and/or neuropathy presenting in their patients. Patients who develop these symptoms should be reassessed and their treatment regimens evaluated.

Treatment with montelukast does not alter the need for patients with aspirin-sensitive asthma to avoid taking aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

Neuropsychiatric events such as behavioural changes, depression and suicidality have been reported in all age groups taking montelukast (see section 4.8). The symptoms may be serious and continue if the treatment is not withdrawn. Therefore the treatment with montelukast should be discontinued if neuropsychiatric symptoms occur during treatment. Advise patients and/or caregivers to be alert for neuropsychiatric events and instruct them to notify their physician if these changes in behaviour occur.

Special information about some of the ingredients

This medicine contains 1.5 mg aspartame in each chewable tablet. Aspartame is a source of phenylalanine. It may be harmful for patients with phenylketonuria (PKU), a rare genetic disorder in which phenylalanine builds up because the body cannot remove it properly.

This medicine contains less than 1 mmol sodium (23 mg) per chewable tablet, that is to say essentially "sodium-free".

4.5 Interaction with other medicinal products and other forms of interaction

Montelukast may be administered with other therapies routinely used in the prophylaxis and chronic treatment of asthma. In drug-interactions studies, the recommended clinical dose of montelukast did not have clinically important effects on the pharmacokinetics of the following medicinal products: theophylline, prednisone, prednisolone, oral contraceptives (ethinyl oestradiol/norethindrone 35/1), terfenadine, digoxin and warfarin.

The area under the plasma concentration curve (AUC) for montelukast was decreased approximately 40% in subjects with co-administration of phenobarbital. Since montelukast is metabolised by CYP 3A4, 2C8, and 2C9, caution should be exercised, particularly in children, when montelukast is co-administered with inducers of CYP 3A4, 2C8, and 2C9, such as phenytoin, phenobarbital and rifampicin.

In vitro studies have shown that montelukast is a potent inhibitor of CYP 2C8. However, data from a clinical drug-drug interaction study involving montelukast and rosiglitazone (a probe substrate representative of medicinal products primarily metabolised by CYP 2C8) demonstrated that montelukast does not inhibit CYP 2C8 *in vivo*. Therefore, montelukast is not anticipated to markedly alter the metabolism of medicinal products metabolised by this enzyme (e.g., paclitaxel, rosiglitazone, and repaglinide).

In vitro studies have shown that montelukast is a substrate of CYP 2C8, and to a less significant extent, of 2C9, and 3A4. In a clinical drug-drug interaction study involving montelukast and gemfibrozil (an inhibitor of both CYP 2C8 and 2C9) gemfibrozil increased the systemic exposure of montelukast by 4.4-fold. No routine dosage adjustment of montelukast is required upon co-administration with gemfibrozil or other potent inhibitors of CYP 2C8, but the physician should be aware of the potential for an increase in adverse reactions.

Based on *in vitro* data, clinically important drug interactions with less potent inhibitors of CYP 2C8 (e.g., trimethoprim) are not anticipated. Co-administration of montelukast with itraconazole, a strong inhibitor of CYP 3A4, resulted in no significant increase in the systemic exposure of montelukast.

4.6 Fertility, pregnancy and lactation

Pregnancy

Animal studies do not indicate harmful effects with respect to effects on pregnancy or embryonal/foetal development.

Available data from published prospective and retrospective cohort studies with montelukast use in pregnant women evaluating major birth defects have not established a drug-associated risk. Available studies have methodologic limitations, including small sample size, in some cases retrospective data collection, and inconsistent comparator groups.

Montelukast may be used during pregnancy only if it is considered to be clearly essential.

Breast-feeding

Studies in rats have shown that montelukast is excreted in milk (see section 5.3). It is unknown whether montelukast/metabolites are excreted in human milk.

Montelukast may be used in breast-feeding only if it is considered to be clearly essential.

4.7 Effects on ability to drive and use machines

Montelukast has no or negligible influence on the ability to drive and use machines. However, individuals have reported drowsiness or dizziness.

4.8 Undesirable effects

Montelukast has been evaluated in clinical studies as follows:

- 10 mg film-coated tablets in approximately 4,000 adult patients and adolescent patients 15 years of age and older, and
- 5 mg chewable tablets in approximately 1,750 paediatric patients 6 to 14 years of age. The following drug-related adverse reactions in clinical studies were reported commonly ($\geq 1/100$ to $< 1/10$) in patients treated with montelukast and at a greater incidence than in patients treated with placebo:

Body System Class	Adult and Adolescent Patients 15 years and older (two	Paediatric Patients 6 to 14 years old
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	12-week studies; n=795)	(one 8-week study; n=201) (two 56-week studies; n=615)
Nervous system disorders	headache	headache
Gastrointestinal disorders	abdominal pain	

With prolonged treatment in clinical trials with a limited number of patients for up to 2 years for adults, and up to 12 months for paediatric patients 6 to 14 years of age, the safety profile did not change.

Tabulated list of Adverse Reactions

Adverse reactions reported in post-marketing use are listed, by System Organ Class and specific Adverse Reactions, in the table below. Frequency Categories were estimated based on relevant clinical trials.

System Organ Class	Frequency Category*	Adverse Reactions term
Infections and infestations	Very Common	upper respiratory infection†
Blood and lymphatic system disorders	Rare	increased bleeding tendency
	Very Rare	thrombocytopenia
Immune system disorders	Uncommon	hypersensitivity reactions including anaphylaxis
	Very Rare	hepatic eosinophilic infiltration
Psychiatric disorders	Uncommon	dream abnormalities including nightmares, insomnia, somnambulism, anxiety, agitation including aggressive behaviour or hostility, depression, psychomotor hyperactivity (including irritability, restlessness, tremor [§])
	Rare	disturbance in attention, memory impairment, tic
	Very Rare	hallucinations, disorientation, suicidal thinking and behaviour (suicidality), obsessive-compulsive symptoms, dysphemia
Nervous system disorders	Uncommon	dizziness, drowsiness, paraesthesia/hypoesthesia, seizure
Cardiac disorders	Rare	palpitations
Respiratory, thoracic and mediastinal disorders	Uncommon	epistaxis
	Very Rare	Churg-Strauss Syndrome (CSS) (see section 4.4)
	Very Rare	pulmonary eosinophilia
Gastrointestinal disorders	Common	diarrhoea‡, nausea‡, vomiting‡
	Uncommon	dry mouth, dyspepsia
Hepatobiliary disorders	Common	elevated levels of serum transaminases (ALT, AST)
	Very Rare	hepatitis (including cholestatic, hepatocellular and mixed-pattern liver injury).
Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders	Common	rash‡
	Uncommon	bruising, urticaria, pruritus
	Rare	angioedema
	Very Rare	erythema nodosum, erythema multiforme
Musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders	Uncommon	arthralgia, myalgia, including muscular cramps
Renal and urinary disorders	Uncommon	enuresis in children

General disorders and administration site conditions	Common	pyrexia [‡]
	Uncommon	asthenia/fatigue, malaise, oedema
<p>*Frequency Category: Defined for each Adverse Reaction by the incidence reported in the clinical trials data base: Very Common ($\geq 1/10$), Common ($\geq 1/100$ to $< 1/10$), Uncommon ($\geq 1/1,000$ to $< 1/100$), Rare ($\geq 1/10,000$ to $< 1/1,000$), Very Rare ($< 1/10,000$).</p> <p>[†]This adverse experience, reported as Very Common in the patients who received montelukast, was also reported as Very Common in the patients who received placebo in clinical trials.</p> <p>[‡]This adverse experience, reported as Common in the patients who received montelukast, was also reported as Common in the patients who received placebo in clinical trials.</p> <p>[§] Frequency Category: Rare</p>		

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

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4.9 Overdose

In chronic asthma studies, montelukast has been administered at doses up to 200 mg/day to adult patients for 22 weeks and in short-term studies, up to 900 mg/day to patients for approximately one week without clinically important adverse experiences. There have been reports of acute overdose in post-marketing experience and clinical studies with montelukast. These include reports in adults and children with a dose as high as 1,000 mg (approximately 61 mg/kg in a 42 month old child). The clinical and laboratory findings observed were consistent with the safety profile in adults and paediatric patients. There were no adverse experiences in the majority of overdose reports.

Symptoms of overdose

The most frequently occurring adverse experiences were consistent with the safety profile of montelukast and included abdominal pain, somnolence, thirst, headache, vomiting, and psychomotor hyperactivity.

Management of overdose

No specific information is available on the treatment of overdose with montelukast. It is not known whether montelukast is dialysable by peritoneal- or haemo-dialysis.

5 PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES

5.1 Pharmacodynamic properties

Pharmacotherapeutic group: Other systemic drugs for obstructive airway diseases, Leukotriene receptor antagonists, ATC code: R03DC03.

Mechanism of action

The cysteinyl leukotrienes (LTC₄, LTD₄, LTE₄) are potent inflammatory eicosanoids released from various cells including mast cells and eosinophils. These important pro-asthmatic mediators bind to cysteinyl leukotriene receptors (CysLT) found in the human airway and cause airway actions, including bronchoconstriction, mucous secretion, vascular permeability, and eosinophil recruitment.

Pharmacodynamic effects

Montelukast is an orally active compound which binds with high affinity and selectivity to the CysLT₁ receptor. In clinical studies, montelukast inhibits bronchoconstriction due to inhaled LTD₄ at doses as low as 5 mg. Bronchodilation was observed

within two hours of oral administration. The bronchodilation effect caused by a β -agonist was additive to that caused by montelukast. Treatment with montelukast inhibited both early- and late-phase bronchoconstriction due to antigen challenge. Montelukast, compared with placebo, decreased peripheral blood eosinophils in adult and paediatric patients. In a separate study, treatment with montelukast significantly decreased eosinophils in the airways (as measured in sputum) and in peripheral blood while improving clinical asthma control.

Clinical efficacy and safety

In studies in adults, montelukast, 10 mg once daily, compared with placebo, demonstrated significant improvements in morning FEV₁ (10.4% vs 2.7% change from baseline), AM peak expiratory flow rate (PEFR) (24.5 L/min vs 3.3 L/min change from baseline), and significant decrease in total β -agonist use (-26.1% vs -4.6% change from baseline). Improvement in patient-reported daytime and night-time asthma symptoms scores was significantly better than placebo.

Studies in adults demonstrated the ability of montelukast to add to the clinical effect of inhaled corticosteroid (% change from baseline for inhaled beclomethasone plus montelukast vs beclomethasone, respectively for FEV₁: 5.43% vs 1.04%; β -agonist use: -8.70% vs 2.64%). Compared with inhaled beclomethasone (200 μ g twice daily with a spacer device), montelukast demonstrated a more rapid initial response, although over the 12-week study, beclomethasone provided a greater average treatment effect (% change from baseline for montelukast vs beclomethasone, respectively for FEV₁: 7.49% vs 13.3%; β -agonist use: -28.28% vs -43.89%). However, compared with beclomethasone, a high percentage of patients treated with montelukast achieved similar clinical responses (e.g., 50% of patients treated with beclomethasone achieved an improvement in FEV₁ of approximately 11% or more over baseline while approximately 42% of patients treated with montelukast achieved the same response).

In an 8-week study in paediatric patients 6 to 14 years of age, montelukast 5 mg once daily, compared with placebo, significantly improved respiratory function (FEV₁ 8.71% vs 4.16% change from baseline; AM PEFR 27.9 L/min vs 17.8 L/min change from baseline) and decreased "as-needed" β -agonist use (-11.7% vs +8.2% change from baseline).

In a 12-month study comparing the efficacy of montelukast to inhaled fluticasone on asthma control in paediatric patients 6 to 14 years of age with mild persistent asthma, montelukast was non-inferior to fluticasone in increasing the percentage of asthma rescue-free days (RFDs), the primary endpoint. Averaged over the 12-month treatment period, the percentage of asthma RFDs increased from 61.6 to 84.0 in the montelukast group and from 60.9 to 86.7 in the fluticasone group. The between group difference in LS mean increase in the percentage of asthma RFDs was statistically significant (-2.8 with a 95% CI of -4.7, -0.9), but within the limit pre-defined to be clinically not inferior. Both montelukast and fluticasone also improved asthma control on secondary variables assessed over the 12 month treatment period:

FEV₁ increased from 1.83 L to 2.09 L in the montelukast group and from 1.85 L to 2.14 L in the fluticasone group. The between-group difference in LS mean increase in FEV₁ was -0.02 L with a 95% CI of -0.06, 0.02. The mean increase from baseline in % predicted FEV₁ was 0.6% in the montelukast treatment group, and 2.7% in the fluticasone treatment group. The difference in LS means for the change from baseline in the % predicted FEV₁ was significant: -2.2% with a 95% CI of -3.6, -0.7.

The percentage of days with β -agonist use decreased from 38.0 to 15.4 in the montelukast group, and from 38.5 to 12.8 in the fluticasone group. The between group difference in LS means for the percentage of days with β -agonist use was significant: 2.7 with a 95% CI of 0.9, 4.5.

The percentage of patients with an asthma attack (an asthma attack being defined as a period of worsening asthma that required treatment with oral steroids, an unscheduled visit to the doctor's office, an emergency room visit, or hospitalisation) was 32.2 in the montelukast group and 25.6 in the fluticasone group; the odds ratio (95% CI) being significant: equal to 1.38 (1.04, 1.84).

The percentage of patients with systemic (mainly oral) corticosteroid use during the study period was 17.8% in the montelukast group and 10.5% in the fluticasone group. The between group difference in LS means was significant: 7.3% with a 95% CI of 2.9; 11.7.

Significant reduction of exercise-induced bronchoconstriction (EIB) was demonstrated in a 12-week study in adults (maximal fall in FEV₁ 22.33% for montelukast vs 32.40% for placebo; time to recovery to within 5% of baseline FEV₁ 44.22 min vs 60.64 min). This effect was consistent throughout the 12-week study period. Reduction in EIB was also demonstrated in a short term study in paediatric patients (maximal fall in FEV₁ 18.27% vs 26.11%; time to recovery to within 5% of baseline FEV₁ 17.76 min vs 27.98 min). The effect in both studies was demonstrated at the end of the once-daily dosing interval.

In aspirin-sensitive asthmatic patients receiving concomitant inhaled and/or oral corticosteroids, treatment with montelukast, compared with placebo, resulted in significant improvement in asthma control (FEV₁ 8.55% vs -1.74% change from baseline and decrease in total β -agonist use -27.78% vs 2.09% change from baseline).

5.2 Pharmacokinetic properties

Absorption

Montelukast is rapidly absorbed following oral administration. For the 10 mg film-coated tablet, the mean peak plasma concentration (C_{max}) is achieved 3 hours (T_{max}) after administration in adults in the fasted state. The mean oral bioavailability is 64%. The oral bioavailability and C_{max} are not influenced by a standard meal. Safety and efficacy were demonstrated in clinical trials where the 10 mg film-coated tablet was administered without regard to the timing of food ingestion.

For the 5 mg chewable tablet, the C_{max} is achieved in 2 hours after administration in adults in the fasted state. The mean oral bioavailability is 73% and is decreased to 63% by a standard meal.

Distribution

Montelukast is more than 99% bound to plasma proteins. The steady-state volume of distribution of montelukast averages 8-11 litres. Studies in rats with radiolabelled montelukast indicate minimal distribution across the blood-brain barrier. In addition, concentrations of radiolabelled material at 24 hours post-dose were minimal in all other tissues.

Biotransformation

Montelukast is extensively metabolised. In studies with therapeutic doses, plasma concentrations of metabolites of montelukast are undetectable at steady state in adults and children.

Cytochrome P450 2C8 is the major enzyme in the metabolism of montelukast. Additionally CYP 3A4, and 2C9 may have a minor contribution, although itraconazole, an inhibitor of CYP 3A4, was shown not to change pharmacokinetic variables of montelukast in healthy subjects that received 10 mg montelukast daily. Based on *in vitro* results in human liver microsomes, therapeutic plasma concentrations of montelukast do not inhibit cytochromes P450 3A4, 2C9, 1A2, 2A6, 2C19, or 2D6. The contribution of metabolites to the therapeutic effect of montelukast is minimal.

Elimination

The plasma clearance of montelukast averages 45 ml/min in healthy adults. Following an oral dose of radiolabelled montelukast, 86% of the radioactivity was recovered in 5-day faecal collections and <0.2% was recovered in urine. Coupled with estimates of montelukast oral bioavailability, this indicates that montelukast and its metabolites are excreted almost exclusively via the bile.

Characteristics in patients

No dosage adjustment is necessary for the elderly or mild to moderate hepatic insufficiency. Studies in patients with renal impairment have not been undertaken. Because montelukast and its metabolites are eliminated by the biliary route, no dose adjustment is anticipated to be necessary in patients with renal impairment. There are no data on the pharmacokinetics of montelukast in patients with severe hepatic insufficiency (Child-Pugh score >9).

With high doses of montelukast (20- and 60-fold the recommended adult dose), a decrease in plasma theophylline concentration was observed. This effect was not seen at the recommended dose of 10 mg once daily.

5.3 Preclinical safety data

In animal toxicity studies, minor serum biochemical alterations in ALT, glucose, phosphorus and triglycerides were observed which were transient in nature. The signs of toxicity in animals were increased excretion of saliva, gastro-intestinal symptoms, loose stools and ion imbalance. These occurred at dosages which provided >17-fold the systemic exposure seen at the clinical dosage. In monkeys, the adverse effects appeared at doses from 150 mg/kg/day (>232-fold the systemic exposure seen at the clinical dose). In animal studies, montelukast did not affect fertility or reproductive performance at systemic exposure exceeding the clinical systemic exposure by greater than 24-fold. A slight decrease in pup body weight was noted in the female fertility study in rats at 200 mg/kg/day (>69-fold the clinical systemic exposure). In studies in rabbits, a higher incidence of incomplete ossification, compared with concurrent control animals, was seen at systemic exposure >24-fold the clinical systemic exposure seen at the clinical dose. No abnormalities were seen in rats. Montelukast has been shown to cross the placental barrier and is excreted in breast milk of animals.

No deaths occurred following a single oral administration of montelukast sodium at doses up to 5,000 mg/kg in mice and rats (15,000 mg/m² and 30,000 mg/m² in mice and rats, respectively), the maximum dose tested. This dose is equivalent to 25,000 times the recommended daily adult human dose (based on an adult patient weight of 50 kg).

Montelukast was determined not to be phototoxic in mice for UVA, UVB or visible light spectra at doses up to 500 mg/kg/day (approximately >200-fold based on systemic exposure).

Montelukast was neither mutagenic in *in vitro* and *in vivo* tests nor tumorigenic in rodent species.

6 PHARMACEUTICAL PARTICULARS

6.1 List of excipients

Mannitol (E421)
Cellulose, microcrystalline
Croscarmellose sodium
Hydroxypropylcellulose
Aspartame (E951)
Iron oxide, Red (E172)
Flavour cherry black (also contains glyceryl triacetate (E1518))
Magnesium stearate

6.2 Incompatibilities

Not applicable.

6.3 Shelf life

3 years.

6.4 Special precautions for storage

Store in the original package in order to protect from light.

6.5 Nature and contents of container

OPA/Alu/PVC//Alu blister, pack sizes: 7, 10, 14, 20, 28, 30, 49, 50, 56, 84, 90, 98, 100, 140 or 200 chewable tablets, in a box.
Not all pack sizes may be marketed.

6.6 Special precautions for disposal and other handling

No special requirements.

7 MARKETING AUTHORISATION HOLDER

KRKA, d.d., Novo mesto
Šmarješka cesta 6
8501 Novo mesto
Slovenia

8 MARKETING AUTHORISATION NUMBER

PA1347/039/002

9 DATE OF FIRST AUTHORISATION/RENEWAL OF THE AUTHORISATION

Date of first authorisation: 22nd October 2010

Date of last renewal: 5th May 2013

10 DATE OF REVISION OF THE TEXT

February 2024