



December 19, 2005

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**Health Canada Endorsed Important Safety Information on  
Pr AVANDIA® and Pr AVANDAMET®**

Dear Health Care Professional:

**Subject: Association of Pr AVANDIA® and Pr AVANDAMET® with new onset and/or worsening of macular edema**

GlaxoSmithKline Inc. (GSK) in consultation with Health Canada would like to inform you of new safety information regarding rosiglitazone-containing products AVANDIA® (rosiglitazone maleate) tablets and AVANDAMET® (rosiglitazone maleate/metformin hydrochloride) tablets. These products are anti-diabetic therapies used in treating type 2 diabetes mellitus. Rare post-market reports of serious adverse events, describing visual impairment due to new onset and/or worsening of macular edema have been received, including reports originating in Canada. In some cases, the visual impairment was reported to have improved or resolved following discontinuation of AVANDIA or AVANDAMET. In the majority of cases, patients also reported fluid retention, peripheral edema or weight gain. Reports received include patients using rosiglitazone both as monotherapy and in combination with other hypoglycemic agents.

- New onset and/or worsening of macular edema has been reported in diabetic patients treated with the rosiglitazone containing products AVANDIA® and AVANDAMET®.
- Discontinuation of AVANDIA®/AVANDAMET® should be considered in patients reporting visual deterioration **and** ophthalmological consultation should be sought.
- AVANDIA®/AVANDAMET® should be used with caution in patients with pre-existing diagnosis of macular edema or diabetic retinopathy.

Macular edema typically occurs in association with diabetic retinopathy, although it is more likely to occur as retinopathy progresses. Risk factors for macular edema include duration of diabetes, presence of retinopathy, hypertension, and poor glycemic control. Symptoms suggestive of macular edema include blurred or distorted vision, decreased colour sensitivity, and decreased dark adaptation.

GSK is sending this letter in order to highlight this important new safety information and the Canadian product monographs for AVANDIA® and AVANDAMET® will be updated. Health Canada will review this new information for AVANDIA® and AVANDAMET® and will do so for similar anti-diabetic drugs.

Managing marketed health product-related adverse reactions depends on health care professionals and consumers reporting them. Reporting rates determined on the basis of spontaneously reported post-marketing adverse reactions are generally presumed to underestimate the risks associated with health product treatments. Any case of serious macular edema or other serious or unexpected adverse reactions in patients receiving AVANDIA® or AVANDAMET® should be reported to GlaxoSmithKline or Health Canada at the following addresses:

GlaxoSmithKline Inc  
7333 Mississauga Rd.  
Mississauga, Ontario  
L5N 6L4  
Tel: 1-800-387-7374

**Any suspected adverse reaction can also be reported to:**

Canadian Adverse Drug Reaction Monitoring Program (CADRMP)

Marketed Health Products Directorate

HEALTH CANADA

Address Locator: 0701C

OTTAWA, Ontario, K1A 0K9

Tel: (613) 957-0337 or Fax: (613) 957-0335

To report an Adverse Reaction, consumers and health professionals may call toll free:

Tel: 866 234-2345

Fax: 866 678-6789

[cadrmpp@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:cadrmpp@hc-sc.gc.ca)

The [AR Reporting Form](#) and the [AR Guidelines](#) can be found on the Health Canada web site or in *The Canadian Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties*.

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/medeff/report-declaration/form/ar-ei\\_form\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/medeff/report-declaration/form/ar-ei_form_e.html)

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/medeff/report-declaration/guide/ar-ei\\_guide-ldir\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/medeff/report-declaration/guide/ar-ei_guide-ldir_e.html)

**For other inquiries related to this communication, please contact Health Canada at:**

Marketed Health Products Directorate (MHPD)

[mhpd\\_dpdc@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:mhpd_dpdc@hc-sc.gc.ca)

Tel: (613) 954-6522

Fax: (613) 952-7738

Your professional commitment in this regard has an important role in protecting the well-being of your patients by contributing to early signal detection and informed drug use.

Any questions from health care professionals may be directed to our Medical Information department via GSK Customer Service at 1-800-387-7374.

Sincerely



Dr. John A Dillon MB BCh MFPM  
VP, Medical Division and Chief Medical Officer  
GlaxoSmithKline Inc.