

## **Almirall signs a co-marketing agreement with MSD to commercialise in Spain a new medicine for type 2 diabetes**

- **Tesavel<sup>®</sup> (sitagliptin) is a new type 2 diabetes medicine that addresses glycemic control.**
- **In 2009 Almirall will also be launching a new sitagliptin and metformin combination product.**

**Barcelona, 4 November 2008.-** Almirall, the international pharmaceutical company based in Spain, has signed a co-marketing agreement with Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD), by virtue of which MSD grants Almirall marketing rights for sitagliptin in Spain under the trademark *Tesavel<sup>®</sup>*, previously marketed solely by MSD under the trademark *Januvia<sup>®</sup>*. This important agreement enables Almirall to include in its portfolio a novel medicine for type 2 diabetes treatment, an area in which it has not been present to date.

### ***Tesavel<sup>®</sup>* (sitagliptin): new medicine for type 2 diabetes**

*Tesavel<sup>®</sup>* (sitagliptin) is indicated for treatment of type 2 diabetes and is one of the new *first-in-class* medicines known as dipeptidyl peptidase- 4 inhibitors (DPP-4). These act to increase active incretin hormone levels that stimulate the body's natural glucose level regulation process. When glucose increases in the blood the incretins act in two ways: stimulating the pancreas to produce insulin and telling the liver to reduce glucose production.

When diet, physical exercise and the intake of medicines such as metformin, sulfonilurea or a PPAR $\gamma$  agonist do not sufficiently control a patient's glucose level, taking *Tesavel<sup>®</sup>* once a day in combination with the above medicines significantly improves glycemic control (1).

### **Type 2 diabetes: a global pandemic**

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes and constitutes 80-90% of cases of this disease. In 1997 worldwide prevalence data revealed around 124 million cases, while it is estimated that for 2025 this figure will exceed 300 million.

If not properly controlled diabetes can give rise to cardiovascular risks and complications such as ictus, heart or liver disease and blindness, among others.

### **Future project for Almirall**

*"We are very pleased to have come to this agreement with MSD as we are convinced that by including *Tesavel<sup>®</sup>* in our product portfolio we will be contributing to improving blood sugar level control in patients with type 2 diabetes.*

*The agreement is also confirmation of the announcement of a new licence for Spain as previously indicated on 15 October. In Almirall we are actively seeking new business opportunities through licence agreements that will enable us to extend our product*

*portfolio as well as continue to research and develop our own pipeline”, affirmed Jorge Gallardo, Chairman – Chief Executive Officer of Almirall.*

Furthermore, in 2009 a new product is also to be launched that combines sitagliptin and metformin in a single tablet and which Almirall will also be marketing under the name *Efficib®*.

Merck & Co., Inc. which operates as Merck, Sharp & Dohme (MSD) in countries outside the U.S., has commercialised sitagliptin in 68 countries since October 2006. MSD’s clinical development programme for sitagliptin is backed by 55 trials involving approximately 12,000 patients. It also has 2 years’ clinical experience with over 7 million prescriptions worldwide.

(1) Reference Tesavel® patient information leaflet

### **About Almirall**

Almirall, an international pharmaceutical company based on innovation and committed to health, headquartered in Barcelona, Spain, researches, develops, manufactures and commercialises its own R&D and licensed drugs with the aim of improving people’s health and wellbeing.

The therapeutic areas on which Almirall focuses its research resources are related to the treatment of asthma, COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, psoriasis and dermatology in general.

Almirall is currently present in over 70 countries with direct presence in Europe and Latin America through 11 affiliates.

For further information please visit the website at: [www.almirall.com](http://www.almirall.com)

#### **More information:**

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