

Japan to further reduce price of Opdivo by 23 percent

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Opdivo is marketed In Japan by Ono Pharmaceuticals



As per reports from a Japanese news portal, the country's health ministry said that the government-set price of blockbuster cancer drug Opdivo will be reduced by over 20 percent from the current level in fiscal 2018, which starts next month.

Initially approved for Melanoma, Opdivo received additional regulatory approval for non-small cell lung cancer and renal cell carcinoma. This has led to excessive use of the top selling cancer drug. Opdivo is marketed In Japan by Ono Pharmaceuticals.

According to an official gazette from the ministry, the price of the drug for lung cancer and other illnesses will decline by 23.8 percent, to about ¥278,000 per 100 milligrams from the current ¥365,000. During the initial registration as a skin cancer medication its price was some ¥730,000.

This is not the first time Opdivo is facing price cut in the country. Earlier, in February 2017, the government halved the Opdivo price in an exceptional move, because it was expected to cost an annual ¥35 million per user, placing financial burdens on the health insurance system.

Government-administered drug prices are reviewed as part of biennial revisions to the medical fees covered by the health insurance system. In fiscal 2018, the overall drug prices are set to fall 1.36 percent, reported the news agency.

Opdivo activates the immune system to fight cancer cells. The number of Opdivo users has surged since the health insurance system began to cover the use of the drug to treat lung cancer.