

Rheumatoid arthritis mAb market to reach \$15.7 bn

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Rheumatoid Arthritis mAb market to touch \$ 15.7 bn by 2018



Singapore: Since 2004, the market for monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) in rheumatoid arthritis (RA) has experienced tremendous growth, and it is on the verge of entering a historically unprecedented scenario over the next six years, according to a new report by healthcare experts GBI Research. The RA mAbs market in the US, Japan, Germany, France, the UK, Italy and Spain is expected to grow from \$11.5 billion in 2011 to \$15.7 billion by 2018.

Eight monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) are currently approved, half of which count among the top 10 best-selling drugs worldwide, collectively generating over \$23 billion in sales in 2011. One-of-these drug, Remicade, is also the bestselling pharmaceutical product across the entire industry. The upcoming patent cliff seems unlikely to knock these popular drugs off their position, in a market that is slow to embrace new products.

The first three mAbs to be approved to treat RA including Remicade, Humira and Enbrel, have consistently dominated RA drug sales since their market entry, despite the approval of arguably more effective mAb products since then.

GBI analyst Mr Dominic Trewartha states that, "Physicians are likely to exercise great caution when prescribing biologics, in part due to their potentially serious side-effects. Rheumatologists in general are also quite conservative in their treatment patterns, which could explain why Remicade, Humira and Enbrel are doing so well, being the first mAbs approved for RA. In contrast, biosimilars are less likely to be prescribed."

He continues, "None of the potential market entrants appear to offer any significant improvements to existing medications, and thus will not dramatically affect the market size in the coming years, leaving Remicade, Humira and Enbrel to maintain their top-selling RA mAbs status."