

AOP Orphan launches drug for Lipodystrophy in HIV patients

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Singapore: AOP Orphan, a pharmaceutical company in the field of rare diseases, has launched world's first drug approved by the FDA that can be used effectively against lipodystrophy (excess abdominal fat), which is widespread among HIV patients, EGRIFTA.

It has been possible to bring HIV under control in recent years with the use of antiretroviral drugs, and many HIV-positive people live much longer than they used to. However, many patients develop complex metabolic changes in the course of essential treatment with HIV drugs, which can lead to a marked increase in visceral abdominal fat (lipohypertrophy) and cardiovascular diseases, as well as favoring myocardial ischemia.

The quality of life among HIV patients is also often negatively impacted by these physical changes. With EGRIFTA, physicians now have a way of treating suitable patients (on a case-by-case basis) that demonstrably reduces this excess abdominal fat.

Tesamorelin, which is already available on the Canadian and US markets under the trademark EGRIFTA as a subcutaneous injection, is a synthetic form of growth-hormone-releasing hormone (GHRH). It stimulates the release of the body's own growth hormone and helps to reduce the amount of fat around the liver, stomach and other abdominal organs.

Furthermore, it can have a positive effect on lipid levels and lower cardiovascular disease risks. The effectiveness of EGRIFTA was evaluated in two separate, randomized and placebo-controlled phase III studies with 806 HIV-infected men and women afflicted by lipodystrophy.