

ESOMEPRAZOLE AUXILTO GASTRO-RESISTANT TABLETS

1. Name of the medicinal product

Esomeprazole Auxilto Gastro-Resistant Tablets 20mg

Esomeprazole Auxilto Gastro-Resistant Tablets 40mg

2. Qualitative and quantitative composition

20 mg:

Each gastro-resistant tablet contains:

Esomeprazole Magnesium Trihydrate equivalent to 20 mg esomeprazole.

40 mg:

Each gastro-resistant tablet contains:

Esomeprazole Magnesium Trihydrate equivalent to 40 mg esomeprazole.

For excipients see "List of excipients".

3. Pharmaceutical form

Gastro-resistant tablet.

Esomeprazole Auxilto Gastro-Resistant Tablets 20mg: Pink, oblong, biconvex, film-coated tablet, engraved '20' on one side and plain on other.

Esomeprazole Auxilto Gastro-Resistant Tablets 40mg: Pink, oblong, biconvex, film-coated tablet, engraved '40' on one side and plain on other.

4. Clinical particulars

4.1 Therapeutic indications

Esomeprazole is indicated for:

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD)

- Treatment of erosive reflux esophagitis.
- Long-term management of patients with healed esophagitis to prevent relapse.
- Symptomatic treatment of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

In combination with an appropriate antibacterial therapeutic regimen for the eradication of *Helicobacter pylori* and

- Healing of *Helicobacter pylori* associated duodenal ulcer and
- Prevention of relapse of peptic ulcers in patients with *Helicobacter pylori* associated ulcers.

Patients requiring continued NSAID therapy

- Healing of gastric ulcers associated with NSAID therapy.
- Prevention of gastric and duodenal ulcers associated with NSAID therapy in patients at risk. Patients are considered to be at risk due to their age (≥ 60) and/or documented history of gastric and/or duodenal ulcers. Controlled studies do not extend beyond 6 months.

Patients requiring continued low dose aspirin (75 – 325 mg) therapy

- Prevention of gastric and/or duodenal ulcers associated with low dose aspirin therapy, in patients at risk.

Prevention of rebleeding of gastric or duodenal ulcers following treatment with Esomeprazole IV Solution by intravenous infusion

Treatment of Zollinger Ellison Syndrome

4.2 Posology and method of administration

Posology

Adults and adolescents from the age of 12 years

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD)

- Treatment of erosive reflux esophagitis: 40 mg once daily for 4 weeks.
An additional 4 weeks treatment is recommended for patients in whom esophagitis has not healed or who have persistent symptoms.
- Long-term management of patients with healed esophagitis to prevent relapse: 20 mg once daily.
Controlled studies in adolescence do not extend beyond 8 weeks. Therefore, physicians who elect to use esomeprazole in adolescents for extended periods should periodically re-evaluate the long-term risks and benefits of the drug for the individual patient.

- Symptomatic treatment of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD): 20 mg once daily in patients without esophagitis. If symptom control has not been achieved after four weeks, the patient should be further investigated. Once symptoms have resolved, subsequent symptom control can be achieved using an on demand regimen taking 20 mg once daily, when needed. In NSAID treated patients at risk of developing gastric and duodenal ulcers, subsequent symptom control using an on demand regimen is not recommended.

Adults

In combination with an appropriate antibacterial therapeutic regimen for the eradication of *Helicobacter pylori* and

- Healing of *Helicobacter pylori* associated duodenal ulcer: 20 mg esomeprazole with 1 g amoxicillin and 500 mg clarithromycin, all twice daily for 7 days.
- Prevention of relapse of peptic ulcers in patients with *Helicobacter pylori* associated ulcers: 20 mg esomeprazole with 1 g amoxicillin and 500 mg clarithromycin, all twice daily for 7 days.

When selecting appropriate combination therapy, consideration should be given to official national, regional and local guidance regarding bacterial resistance, duration of treatment and appropriate use of antibacterial agents.

The treatment should be supervised by a specialist.

The posology recommendation for esomeprazole is the following: 20 mg twice daily for one week.

Patients requiring continued NSAID therapy

- Healing of gastric ulcers associated with NSAID therapy: The usual dose is 20 mg once daily. The treatment duration is 4 – 8 weeks.
- Prevention of gastric and duodenal ulcers associated with NSAID therapy in patients at risk: 20 mg once daily.

Patients requiring continued low dose aspirin therapy

- Prevention of gastric and/or duodenal ulcers associated with low dose aspirin therapy in patients at risk: 20 mg or 40 mg once daily.

The therapeutic benefit of esomeprazole 40 mg over esomeprazole 20 mg over the prevention of gastric and/or duodenal ulcers was not demonstrated. Dose of 40 mg can be initiated in patients presented with erosive reflux esophagitis. Refer to posology for erosive reflux esophagitis.

Prevention of rebleeding of gastric or duodenal ulcers following treatment with *Esomeprazole IV Solution* by intravenous infusion

40 mg once daily for 4 weeks after i.v. induced prevention of rebleeding of peptic ulcers.

Treatment of Zollinger Ellison Syndrome

The recommended initial dosage is esomeprazole 40 mg twice daily. The dosage should then be individually adjusted, and treatment continued as long as clinically indicated. Based on the clinical data available, the majority of patients can be controlled on doses between 80 to 160 mg esomeprazole daily. With doses above 80 mg daily, the dose should be divided and given twice daily. Safety information is limited in doses above 80 mg a day. Clinical trial in adults does not extend beyond 12 months for esomeprazole doses 80 mg daily or higher. Therefore, physicians who elect to use esomeprazole in extended periods should periodically re-evaluate the long-term risks and benefits of the drug for the individual patient.

Children below the age of 12 years

Esomeprazole should not be used in children younger than 12 years since no data is available.

Impaired renal function

Dose adjustment is not required in patients with impaired renal function. Due to limited experience in patients with severe renal insufficiency, such patients should be treated with caution (See “Pharmacokinetics Properties”).

Impaired hepatic function

Dose adjustment is not required in patients with mild to moderate liver impairment. For patients with severe liver impairment, a maximum dose of 20 mg Esomeprazole should not be exceeded (See “Pharmacokinetics Properties”).

Elderly

Dose adjustment is not required in the elderly.

Method of administration

- The tablets should be swallowed whole with liquid. The tablets should not be chewed or crushed.
- For patients who have difficulty in swallowing, the tablets can also be dispersed in half a glass of non-carbonated water. No other liquids should be used as the enteric coating may be dissolved. Stir until the tablets disintegrate and drink the liquid with the pellets immediately or within 30 minutes. Rinse the glass with half a glass of water and drink. The pellets must not be chewed or crushed.
- For patients who cannot swallow, the tablets can be dispersed in non-carbonated water and administered through a gastric tube. It is important that the appropriateness of the selected syringe and tube is carefully tested.
- For preparation and administration instructions see “Instructions for use and handling”.

4.3 Contraindications

- Known hypersensitivity to esomeprazole, substituted benzimidazoles or any other constituents of the formulation.
- Esomeprazole should not be used concomitantly with nelfinavir (see “Interactions”).

4.4 Special warnings and special precautions for use

In the presence of any alarm symptom (e.g. significant unintentional weight loss, recurrent vomiting, dysphagia, haematemesis or melaena) and when gastric ulcer is suspected or present, malignancy should be excluded, as treatment with esomeprazole may alleviate symptoms and delay diagnosis.

Proton Pump Inhibitor

Long term use (Regular surveillance)

Patients on long-term treatment (particularly those treated for more than a year) should be kept under regular surveillance.

On demand treatment

Patients on on-demand treatment should be instructed to contact their physician if their symptoms change in character. When prescribing esomeprazole for on demand therapy, the implications for interactions with other pharmaceuticals, due to fluctuating plasma concentrations of esomeprazole should be considered (See “Interactions”).

Helicobacter pylori eradication

When prescribing esomeprazole for eradication of *Helicobacter pylori* possible drug interactions for all components in the triple therapy should be considered. Clarithromycin is a potent inhibitor of CYP3A4 and hence contraindications and interactions for clarithromycin should be considered when the triple therapy is used in patients concurrently taking other drugs metabolised via CYP3A4 such as cisapride.

Gastrointestinal infections

Treatment with proton pump inhibitors may lead to slightly increased risk of gastrointestinal infections such as Salmonella and Campylobacter (see “Pharmacodynamics Properties”).

Clostridium Difficile diarrhea

Published observational studies suggest that PPI therapy may be associated with an increased risk of *Clostridium difficile* associated diarrhea, especially in hospitalized patients. This diagnosis should be considered for diarrhea that does not improve. Patients should use the lowest dose and shortest duration of PPI therapy appropriate to the condition being treated.

Vitamin B12 deficiency

Daily treatment with any acid-suppressing medications over a long period of time (e.g., longer than 3 years) may lead to malabsorption of cyanocobalamin (vitamin B12) caused by hypo- or achlorhydria. Rare reports of cyanocobalamin deficiency occurring with acid-suppressing therapy have been reported in the literature. This diagnosis should be considered if clinical symptoms consistent with cyanocobalamin deficiency are observed.

Hypomagnesaemia

Severe hypomagnesaemia has been reported in patients treated with proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) like esomeprazole for at least three months, and in most cases for a year. Serious manifestations of hypomagnesaemia such as fatigue, tetany, delirium, convulsions, dizziness and ventricular arrhythmia can occur but they may begin insidiously and be overlooked. In most affected patients, hypomagnesaemia improved after magnesium replacement and discontinuation of the PPI.

For patients expected to be on prolonged treatment or who take PPIs with digoxin or medicinal products that may cause hypomagnesaemia (e.g., diuretics), health care professionals should consider measuring magnesium levels before starting PPI treatment and periodically during treatment.

Risk of fracture

Proton pump inhibitors, especially if used in high doses and over long durations (>1 year), may modestly increase the risk of hip, wrist and spine fracture, predominantly in the elderly or in presence of other recognised risk factors. Observational studies suggest that proton pump inhibitors may increase the overall risk of fracture by 10–40%. Some of this increase may be due to other risk factors. Patients at risk of osteoporosis should receive care according to current clinical guidelines and they should have an adequate intake of vitamin D and calcium.

Subacute cutaneous lupus erythematosus (SCLE)

Proton pump inhibitors are associated with very infrequent cases of SCLE. If lesions occur, especially in sun-exposed areas of the skin, and if accompanied by arthralgia, the patient should seek medical help promptly and the health care professional should consider stopping esomeprazole. SCLE after previous treatment with a proton pump inhibitor may increase the risk of SCLE with other proton pump inhibitors.

Combination with other medicinal products

Co-administration of esomeprazole with atazanavir is not recommended (see “Interactions”). If the combination of atazanavir with a proton pump inhibitor is judged unavoidable, close clinical monitoring is recommended in combination with an increase in the dose of atazanavir to 400 mg with 100 mg of ritonavir; esomeprazole 20 mg should not be exceeded.

Esomeprazole is a CYP2C19 inhibitor. When starting or ending treatment with esomeprazole, the potential for interactions with medicinal products metabolised through CYP2C19 should be considered. An interaction is observed between clopidogrel and esomeprazole (see “Interactions”). The clinical relevance of this interaction is uncertain. As a precaution, concomitant use of esomeprazole and clopidogrel should be discouraged.

When prescribing esomeprazole for on demand therapy, the implications for interactions with other pharmaceuticals, due to fluctuating plasma concentrations of esomeprazole should be considered.

Interference with laboratory tests

Increased Chromogranin A (CgA) level may interfere with investigations for neuroendocrine tumours. To avoid this interference, esomeprazole treatment should be stopped for at least 5 days before CgA measurements (see section “Pharmacodynamics Properties”). If CgA and gastrin levels have not returned to reference range after initial measurement, measurements should be repeated 14 days after cessation of proton pump inhibitor treatment.

Excipients

Sucrose: Patients with rare hereditary problems of fructose intolerance, glucose-galactose malabsorption or sucrase-isomaltase insufficiency should not take this medicine.

Lactose monohydrate: Patients with rare hereditary problem of galactose intolerance, total lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption should not take this medicine.

4.5 Interaction with other medical products and other forms of interaction

Effects of esomeprazole on the pharmacokinetics of other drugs

Medicinal products with pH dependent absorption

Gastric acid suppression during treatment with esomeprazole and other PPIs might decrease or increase the absorption of medicinal products with a gastric pH dependent absorption. As with other medicinal products that decrease intragastric acidity, the absorption of medicinal products such as ketoconazole, itraconazole and erlotinib can decrease and the absorption of digoxin can increase during treatment with esomeprazole. Concomitant treatment with omeprazole (20 mg daily) and digoxin in healthy subjects increased the bioavailability of digoxin by 10% (up to 30% in two out of ten subjects). Digoxin toxicity has been rarely reported. However, caution should be exercised when esomeprazole is given at high doses in elderly patients. Therapeutic drug monitoring of digoxin should then be reinforced.

Protease inhibitors

Omeprazole has been reported to interact with some protease inhibitors. The clinical importance and the mechanisms behind these reported interactions are not always known. Increased gastric pH during omeprazole treatment may change the absorption of the protease inhibitors. Other possible interaction mechanisms are via inhibition of CYP 2C19.

For atazanavir and nelfinavir, decreased serum levels have been reported when given together with omeprazole and concomitant administration is not recommended. Co-administration of omeprazole (40 mg once daily) with atazanavir 300 mg/ritonavir 100 mg to healthy volunteers resulted in a substantial reduction in atazanavir exposure (approximately 75% decrease in AUC, C_{max} and C_{min}). Increasing the atazanavir dose to 400 mg did not compensate for the impact of omeprazole on atazanavir exposure. The

co-administration of omeprazole (20 mg qd) with atazanavir 400 mg/ritonavir 100 mg to healthy volunteers resulted in a decrease of approximately 30% in the atazanavir exposure as compared with the exposure observed with atazanavir 300 mg/ritonavir 100 mg qd without omeprazole 20 mg qd. Co-administration of omeprazole (40 mg qd) reduced mean nelfinavir AUC, C_{max} and C_{min} by 36-39 % and mean AUC, C_{max} and C_{min} for the pharmacologically active metabolite M8 was reduced by 75-92%. Due to the similar pharmacodynamic effects and pharmacokinetic properties of omeprazole and esomeprazole, concomitant administration with esomeprazole and atazanavir is not recommended (see “Warnings and Precautions”) and concomitant administration with esomeprazole and nelfinavir is contraindicated (see “Contraindications”).

For saquinavir (with concomitant ritonavir), increased serum levels (80-100%) have been reported during concomitant omeprazole treatment (40 mg qd). Treatment with omeprazole 20 mg qd had no effect on the exposure of darunavir (with concomitant ritonavir) and amprenavir (with concomitant ritonavir). Treatment with esomeprazole 20 mg qd had no effect on the exposure of amprenavir (with and without concomitant ritonavir). Treatment with omeprazole 40 mg qd had no effect on the exposure of lopinavir (with concomitant ritonavir).

Methotrexate

When given together with PPIs, methotrexate levels have been reported to increase in some patients. In high-dose methotrexate administration a temporary withdrawal of esomeprazole may need to be considered.

Tacrolimus

Concomitant administration of esomeprazole has been reported to increase the serum levels of tacrolimus. A reinforced monitoring of tacrolimus concentrations as well as renal function (creatinine clearance) should be performed, and dosage of tacrolimus adjusted if needed.

Medicinal products metabolised by CYP2C19

Esomeprazole inhibits CYP2C19, the major esomeprazole-metabolising enzyme. Thus, when esomeprazole is combined with medicinal products metabolised by CYP2C19, such as diazepam, citalopram, imipramine, clomipramine, phenytoin etc., the plasma concentrations of these medicinal products may be increased and a dose reduction could be needed. This should be considered especially when prescribing esomeprazole for on-demand therapy.

Diazepam

Concomitant administration of 30 mg esomeprazole resulted in a 45% decrease in clearance of the CYP2C19 substrate diazepam.

Phenytoin

Concomitant administration of 40 mg esomeprazole resulted in a 13% increase in trough plasma levels of phenytoin in epileptic patients. It is recommended to monitor the plasma concentrations of phenytoin when treatment with esomeprazole is introduced or withdrawn.

Voriconazole

Omeprazole (40 mg once daily) increased voriconazole (a CYP2C19 substrate) C_{max} and AUC by 15% and 41%, respectively.

Warfarin

Concomitant administration of 40 mg esomeprazole to warfarin-treated patients in a clinical trial showed that coagulation times were within the accepted range. However, post-marketing, a few isolated cases of elevated INR of clinical significance have been reported during concomitant treatment. Monitoring is recommended when initiating and ending concomitant esomeprazole treatment during treatment with warfarin or other coumarin derivatives.

Cilostazol

Omeprazole as well as esomeprazole act as inhibitors of CYP2C19. Omeprazole, given in doses of 40 mg to healthy subjects in a cross-over study, increased C_{max} and AUC for cilostazol by 18% and 26% respectively, and one of its active metabolites by 29% and 69% respectively.

Cisapride

In healthy volunteers, concomitant administration of 40 mg esomeprazole resulted in a 32% increase in area under the plasma concentration-time curve (AUC) and a 31% prolongation of elimination half-life ($t_{1/2}$) but no significant increase in peak plasma levels of cisapride. The slightly prolonged QTc interval observed after administration of cisapride alone, was not further prolonged when cisapride was given in combination with esomeprazole (see “Warnings and Precautions”).

Clopidogrel

Results from studies in healthy subjects have shown a pharmacokinetic (PK)/ pharmacodynamic (PD) interaction between clopidogrel (300 mg loading dose/75 mg daily maintenance dose) and esomeprazole (40mg p.o.daily) resulting in decreased exposure to the active metabolite of clopidogrel by an average of 40% and resulting in decreased maximum inhibition of (ADP induced) platelet aggregation by an average of 14%.

When clopidogrel was given together with a fixed dose combination of esomeprazole 20 mg + ASA 81 mg compared to clopidogrel alone in a study in healthy subjects there was a decreased exposure by almost 40% of the active metabolite of clopidogrel. However, the maximum levels of inhibition of (ADP induced) platelet aggregation in these subjects were the same in the clopidogrel and the clopidogrel + the combined (esomeprazole + ASA) product groups.

Inconsistent data on the clinical implications of a PK/PD interaction of esomeprazole in terms of major cardiovascular events have been reported from both observational and clinical studies. As a precaution concomitant use of clopidogrel should be discouraged.

Investigated medicinal products with no clinically relevant interaction

Amoxicillin and quinidine

Esomeprazole has been shown to have no clinically relevant effects on the pharmacokinetics of amoxicillin or quinidine.

Naproxen or rofecoxib

Studies evaluating concomitant administration of esomeprazole and either naproxen or rofecoxib did not identify any clinically relevant pharmacokinetic interactions during short-term studies.

Effects of other medicinal products on the pharmacokinetics of esomeprazole

Medicinal products which inhibit CYP2C19 and/or CYP3A4

Esomeprazole is metabolised by CYP2C19 and CYP3A4. Concomitant administration of esomeprazole and a CYP3A4 inhibitor, clarithromycin (500 mg b.i.d.), resulted in a doubling of the exposure (AUC) to esomeprazole. Concomitant administration of esomeprazole and a combined inhibitor of CYP2C19 and CYP3A4 may result in more than doubling of the esomeprazole exposure. The CYP2C19 and CYP3A4 inhibitor voriconazole increased esomeprazole AUC by 280%. A dose adjustment of esomeprazole is not regularly required in either of these situations. However, dose adjustment should be considered in patients with severe hepatic impairment and if long-term treatment is indicated.

Medicinal products which induce CYP2C19 and/or CYP3A4

Medicinal products known to induce CYP2C19 or CYP3A4 or both (such as rifampicin and St John's wort) may lead to decreased esomeprazole serum levels by increasing the esomeprazole metabolism.

Paediatric population

Interaction studies have only been performed in adults.

4.6 Pregnancy and lactation

Pregnancy

For esomeprazole, limited data on exposed pregnancies are available. With the racemic mixture omeprazole, data on a larger number of exposed pregnancies from epidemiological studies indicate no malformative or foetotoxic events. Animal studies with esomeprazole do not indicate direct or indirect harmful effects with respect to embryonal/fetal development. Animal studies with the racemic mixture do not indicate direct or indirect harmful effects with respect to pregnancy, parturition or postnatal development. Caution should be exercised when prescribing esomeprazole to pregnant women.

Lactation

It is not known whether esomeprazole is excreted in human breast milk. No studies in lactating women have been performed. Therefore, esomeprazole should not be used during breast-feeding.

4.7 Effects on ability to drive or use machines

No effects have been observed.

4.8 Undesirable effects

List of adverse reactions

System Organ Class	Frequency	Undesirable Effect
Blood and lymphatic system disorders	Rare	Leukopenia, thrombocytopenia.
	Very rare	Agranulocytosis, pancytopenia.
Immune system disorders	Rare	Hypersensitivity reactions e.g. fever, angioedema and anaphylactic reaction/shock
Infection and infestation		<i>Clostridium difficile</i> associated diarrhea
Metabolism and nutrition disorders	Uncommon	Peripheral oedema
	Rare	Hyponatraemia
	Not known	Hypomagnesaemia, severe hypomagnesaemia can correlate with hypocalcaemia. Hypomagnesaemia may also result in hypokalaemia. Vitamin B ₁₂ deficiency
Psychiatric disorders	Uncommon	Insomnia

	Rare	Agitation, confusion, depression
	Very rare	Aggression, hallucinations
Nervous system disorders	Common	Headache
	Uncommon	Dizziness, paraesthesia, somnolence
	Rare	Taste disturbance
Eye disorders	Rare	Blurred vision
Ear and labyrinth disorders	Uncommon	Vertigo
Respiratory, thoracic and mediastinal disorders	Rare	Bronchospasm
Gastrointestinal disorders	Common	Abdominal pain, constipation, diarrhoea, flatulence, nausea/vomiting, fundic gland polyps (benign)
	Uncommon	Dry mouth
	Rare	Stomatitis, gastrointestinal candidiasis
	Not known	Microscopic colitis
Hepatobiliary disorders	Uncommon	Increased liver enzymes
	Rare	Hepatitis with or without jaundice
	Very rare	Hepatic failure, encephalopathy in patients with pre-existing liver disease
Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders	Uncommon	Dermatitis, pruritus, rash, urticaria
	Rare	Alopecia, photosensitivity
	Very rare	Erythema multiforme, Stevens-Johnson Syndrome, Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis (TEN)
	Not known	Subacute cutaneous lupus erythematosus (<i>see Warning and precautions</i>)
Musculoskeletal, connective tissue and bone disorders	Uncommon	Fracture of the hip, wrist or spine (<i>see Warning and precautions</i>)
	Rare	Arthralgia, myalgia
	Very rare	Muscular weakness
Renal and urinary disorders	Very rare	Interstitial nephritis; in some patients renal failure has been reported concomitantly.
Reproductive system and breast disorders	Very rare	Gynaecomastia
General disorders and administration site conditions	Rare	Malaise, increased sweating

4.9 Overdose

There is very limited experience to date with deliberate overdose.

Symptoms

The symptoms described in connection with 280 mg were gastrointestinal symptoms and weakness. Single doses of 80 mg esomeprazole were uneventful.

Management

No specific antidote is known. Esomeprazole is extensively plasma protein bound and is therefore not readily dialyzable. As in any case of overdose, treatment should be symptomatic and general supportive measures should be utilized.

5. Pharmacological properties

5.1 Pharmacodynamics properties

Pharmacotherapeutic group: Proton pump inhibitors

ATC code: A02B C05

Esomeprazole is the S-isomer of omeprazole and reduces gastric acid secretion through a specific targeted mechanism of action. It is a specific inhibitor of the acid pump in the parietal cell. Both the R- and S-isomer of omeprazole have similar pharmacodynamic activity.

Site and mechanism of action

Esomeprazole is a weak base and is concentrated and converted to the active form in the highly acidic environment of the secretory canaliculi of the parietal cell, where it inhibits the enzyme H^+ , K^+ -ATPase – the acid pump and inhibits both basal and stimulated acid secretion.

Effect on gastric acid secretion

After oral dosing with esomeprazole 20 mg and 40 mg the onset of effect occurs within one hour. After repeated administration with 20 mg esomeprazole once daily for five days, mean peak acid output after pentagastrin stimulation is decreased 90% when measured 6-7 hours after dosing on day five.

After five days of oral dosing with 20 mg and 40 mg of esomeprazole, intragastric pH above 4 was maintained for a mean time of 13 hours and 17 hours, respectively over 24 hours in symptomatic GERD patients. The proportion of patients maintaining an intragastric pH above 4 for at least 8, 12 and 16 hours respectively were for esomeprazole 20 mg 76%, 54% and 24%. Corresponding proportions for esomeprazole 40 mg were 97%, 92% and 56%.

Using AUC as a surrogate parameter for plasma concentration, a relationship between inhibition of acid secretion and exposure has been shown.

Therapeutic effects of acid inhibition

Healing of reflux esophagitis with esomeprazole 40 mg occurs in approximately 78% of patients after four weeks, and in 93% after eight weeks.

One week treatment with esomeprazole 20 mg b.i.d. and appropriate antibiotics, results in successful eradication of *H. pylori* in approximately 90% of patients. After eradication treatment for one week, there is no need for subsequent monotherapy with antisecretory drugs for effective ulcer healing and symptom resolution in uncomplicated duodenal ulcers.

In a randomized, double blind, placebo-controlled clinical study, patients with endoscopically confirmed peptic ulcer bleeding characterised as Forrest Ia, Ib, IIa or IIb (9%, 43%, 38% and 10 % respectively) were randomized to receive esomeprazole solution for infusion (n=375) or placebo (n=389). Following endoscopic haemostasis, patients received either 80 mg esomeprazole as an intravenous infusion over 30 minutes followed by a continuous infusion of 8 mg per hour or placebo for 72 hours. After the initial 72 hour period, all patients received open-label 40 mg oral esomeprazole for 27 days for acid suppression. The occurrence of rebleeding within 3 days was 5.9% in the esomeprazole treated group compared to 10.3% for the placebo group. At 30 days post-treatment, the occurrence of rebleeding in the esomeprazole treated versus the placebo treated group was 7.7% vs 13.6%.

Other effects related to acid inhibition

During treatment with antisecretory medicinal products serum gastrin increases in response to the decreased acid secretion. Also chromogranin A (CgA) increases due to decreased gastric acidity. The increased CgA level may interfere with investigations for neuroendocrine tumours. Literature reports indicate that proton pump inhibitor treatment should be stopped 5 to 14 days before CgA measurement. This is to allow CgA levels that might be spuriously elevated following PPI treatment to return to reference range.

An increased number of ECL cells possibly related to the increased serum gastrin levels, have been observed in both children and adults during long-term treatment with esomeprazole. The findings are considered to be of no clinical significance.

During long-term treatment with antisecretory drugs, gastric glandular cysts have been reported to occur at a somewhat increased frequency. These changes are a physiological consequence of pronounced inhibition of acid secretion, are benign and appear to be reversible.

Decreased gastric acidity due to any means including proton pump inhibitors, increases gastric counts of bacteria normally present in the gastrointestinal tract. Treatment with proton pump inhibitors may lead to slightly increased risk of gastrointestinal infections such as *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* and, in hospitalised patients, possibly also *Clostridium difficile*.

In two studies with ranitidine as an active comparator, esomeprazole showed better effect in healing of gastric ulcers in patients using NSAIDs, including COX-2 selective NSAIDs.

In two studies with placebo as comparator, esomeprazole showed better effect in the prevention of gastric and duodenal ulcers in patients using NSAIDs (aged > 60 and/or with previous ulcer), including CO-2 selective NSAIDs.

5.2 Pharmacokinetics properties

Absorption

Esomeprazole is acid labile and is administered orally as gastro-resistant granules. *In vivo* conversion to the R-isomer is negligible. Absorption of esomeprazole is rapid, with peak plasma levels occurring approximately 1-2 hours after dose. The absolute bioavailability is 64% after a single dose of 40 mg and increases to 89% after repeated once daily administration. For 20 mg esomeprazole the corresponding values are 50% and 68%, respectively.

Food intake both delays and decreases the absorption of esomeprazole although this has no significant influence on the effect of esomeprazole on intragastric acidity.

Distribution

The apparent volume of distribution at steady state in healthy subjects is approximately 0.22 l/kg body weight. Esomeprazole is 97% plasma protein bound.

Biotransformation

Esomeprazole is completely metabolised by the cytochrome P450 system (CYP). The major part of the metabolism of esomeprazole is dependent on the polymorphic CYP2C19, responsible for the formation of the hydroxy- and desmethyl metabolites of esomeprazole. The remaining part is dependent on another specific isoform, CYP3A4, responsible for the formation of esomeprazole sulphone, the main metabolite in plasma.

Elimination

The parameters below reflect mainly the pharmacokinetics in individuals with a functional CYP2C19 enzyme, extensive metabolisers.

Total plasma clearance is about 17 l/h after a single dose and about 9 l/h after repeated administration. The plasma elimination half-life is about 1.3 hours after repeated once daily dosing. The area under the plasma concentration-time curve increases with repeated administration of esomeprazole. This increase is dose-dependent and results in a non-linear dose-AUC relationship after repeated administration. This time- and dose-dependency is due to a decrease of first pass metabolism and systemic clearance probably caused by an inhibition of the CYP2C19 enzyme by esomeprazole and/or its sulphone metabolite. Esomeprazole is completely eliminated from plasma between doses with no tendency for accumulation during once-daily administration.

The major metabolites of esomeprazole have no effect on gastric acid secretion. Almost 80% of an oral dose of esomeprazole is excreted as metabolites in the urine, the remainder in the faeces. Less than 1% of the parent drug is found in urine.

Special patient populations

Poor metabolisers

Approximately 3% of the population lack a functional CYP2C19 enzyme and are called poor metabolisers. In these individuals the metabolism of esomeprazole is probably mainly catalysed by CYP3A4. After repeated once daily administration of 40 mg esomeprazole, the mean area under the plasma concentration-time curve was approximately 100% higher in poor metabolisers than in subjects having a functional CYP2C19 enzyme (extensive metabolisers). Mean peak plasma concentrations were increased by about 60%. These findings have no implications for the posology of esomeprazole.

Elderly

The metabolism of esomeprazole is not significantly changed in elderly subjects (71-80 years of age).

Gender

Following a single dose of 40 mg esomeprazole the mean area under the plasma concentration-time curve is approximately 30% higher in females than in males. No gender difference is seen after repeated once daily administration. These findings have no implications for the posology of esomeprazole.

Hepatic impairment

The metabolism of esomeprazole in patients with mild to moderate liver dysfunction may be impaired. The metabolic rate is decreased in patients with severe liver dysfunction resulting in a doubling of the area under the plasma concentration-time curve of esomeprazole. Therefore, a maximum of 20 mg should not be exceeded in patients with severe dysfunction. Esomeprazole or its major metabolites do not show any tendency to accumulate with once daily dosing.

Renal impairment

No studies have been performed in patients with decreased renal function. Since the kidney is responsible for the excretion of the metabolites of esomeprazole but not for the elimination of the parent compound, the metabolism of esomeprazole is not expected to be changed in patients with impaired renal function.

Paediatric population

Adolescents 12-18 years:

The efficacy in paediatric population is extrapolated from the efficacy in adult population based on the pharmacokinetic profile of esomeprazole in adolescent population relative to adult population.

Following repeated dose administration of 20 mg and 40 mg esomeprazole, the total exposure (AUC) and the time to reach maximum plasma drug concentration ($t_{\max}$) in 12 to 18 year-olds was similar to that in adults for both esomeprazole doses.

6. Pharmaceutical particulars

6.1 List of excipients

Sugar spheres (60#80), hypromellose, polysorbate 80, sodium hydroxide, hydroxypropyl cellulose, talc, magnesium stearate, methacrylic acid ethyl acrylate copolymer (1:1) dispersion 30%, triethyl citrate, glycerol monostearate, silica colloidal anhydrous, silicified microcrystalline cellulose, lactose monohydrate, crospovidone, povidone K-30, croscarmellose sodium, microcrystalline cellulose, sodium stearyl fumarate, Opadry pink (03F540283).

6.2 Incompatibilities

Not applicable.

6.3 Special precautions for storage

Do not store above 30°C. Store in the original package in order to protect from moisture.

6.4 Nature and contents of container

Aluminium / Aluminium blister of 7 tablets. Box of 4 blisters.

6.5 Instructions for use and handling

Administration through gastric tube.

1. Put the tablet into an appropriate syringe and fill the syringe with approximately 25 mL water and approximately 5 mL air. For some tubes, dispersion in 50 mL water is needed to prevent the pellets from clogging the tube.
2. Immediately shake the syringe for approximately 2 minutes to disperse the tablet.
3. Hold the syringe with the tip up and check that the tip has not clogged.
4. Attach the syringe to the tube whilst maintaining the above position.
5. Shake the syringe and position it with the tip pointing down. Immediately inject 5-10 mL into the tube. Invert the syringe after injection and shake (the syringe must be held with the tip pointing up to avoid clogging of the tip).
6. Turn the syringe with the tip down and immediately inject another 5-10 mL into the tube. Repeat this procedure until the syringe is empty.
7. Fill the syringe with 25 mL of water and 5 mL of air and repeat step 5 if necessary to wash down any sediment left in the syringe. For some tubes, 50 mL water is needed.

Name and address of manufacturer

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