

Lupin in pact with South Korean company

OUR BUREAU

Mumbai, August 6

In its second alliance for insulin products, drugmaker Lupin will sell the LG Life Sciences brand of insulin glargine in India.

Glargine is a long acting insulin given once a day to adults with type 1 diabetes. It is also given for type 2 diabetes to those who need the long-acting insulin to control sugar fluctuations.

Through its distribution agreement with the South Korean company, LG Life Sciences, Lupin will be able to sell the latter's insulin glargine brand Basugine in the local market. Lupin has an existing alliance with Eli Lilly for human insulin.

Price control

The alliance with LG Life Sciences helps cover a large part of the diabetes portfolio, said Shakti Chakraborty, Lupin Group President (India region formulations), adding that they would scout for a couple of more products in the segment. Lupin is already present in the oral anti-diabetes medicine segment and insulin. And revenue from these products is about ₹500 crore, he said, including the alliance products and those that come under the Government's price control net.

Recently, the Government

Lupin products

Basugine pen	999
Basugine cartridge	493
Basugine vial	2,465

had brought in more diabetes drugs under price control, causing heartburn to some companies selling these drugs. However, Chakraborty said that anti-diabetes drugs like metformin, for instance, already have their prices controlled by the Government. Lupin is present across therapeutic segments, he said, to counter the effect of price control on some products.

Industry estimates peg the domestic market for diabetes medicines at ₹6,032 crore, and growing at 18 per cent, Lupin said. More diabetes products are getting prescribed in India, which has the second highest number of people with diabetes, after China.

The market for insulin analogue products is valued at ₹585 crore, growing at 24 per cent.

The market for the glargine molecule is estimated at ₹218 crore, growing at about 23 per cent. Competition in insulin glargine comes from Sanofi, whose Lantus was launched in 2003, Biocon whose Basalog was launched in 2009 and Glaritus from Wokhardt, also launched in 2009.