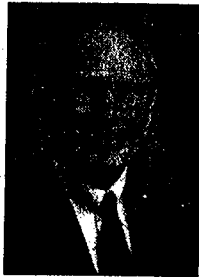


A breakthrough for diabetics

This month, two medications have been FDA approved for the treatment of diabetes. Both are injectable. They will result in weight loss, better blood sugar control, fewer diabetic complications, and a longer and healthier life. However, they are costly, but will be paid for by insurance with the appropriate documentation from the physician.



**DR. J.E.
BLOCK**

ALL THINGS
MEDICAL

SYMLIN® (Pramlintide) is an adjunctive treatment with insulin for both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes. It is used with mealtime insulin therapy in those who fail to achieve the desired glucose control, despite optimization of their insulin.

SYMLIN is a synthetic of human Amylin, a naturally occurring hormone that is normally made by the pancreatic beta-cells (the same cells that make insulin) and helps to control blood sugar following a meal. It decreases the amount of emptying of the stomach, prevents the rise of hyperglycemic (blood sugar elevation) effect of another hormone, Glucagon, from the alpha-cell of the pancreas and, more importantly, leads to decreased caloric intake because of the feeling of satiety, with the stomach telling the brain it is full. The result is normalization of blood sugar and weight loss. Other than the expense, there is little adverse reaction, other than possibly nausea and headache.

BYETTA® (Exenatide) is marketed by Lilly, the biggest manufacturer of insulin in this country. A special injectable pen is used. It is taken twice a day, on hour or less prior to the largest two meals. The drug works very much like the natural hormone, Incretin, which was

discovered 30 years ago. This is normally secreted by the small intestine in response to glucose and absorbed in the blood. It balances out the glucagon with the insulin, the latter from the pancreatic beta cell.

The feedback mechanism to the brain ensures that satiety is reached during the meal rather than 20 to 30 minutes later, which occurs in some of us. In addition to regulating the blood sugar, it does cause a significant weight loss. Studies have shown a 15 pound weight loss per year without changing diet or exercise program. Nausea is a side-effect that is prevented by starting on a half dose for a month, and subsequently the full dose of 5 ug.

For more information on BYETTA, go to www.byetta.com, or if questions about reimbursement from insurance, call 1-800-330-7674.

[Editors note: Views and ideas in this column do not necessarily reflect those of The Coffeyville Journal.]