



Company Statement

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Merck Canada Statement on STROMEKTOL® (ivermectin) use During the COVID-19 Pandemic

KIRKLAND, QC – Feb. 10, 2021 – Merck Canada Inc. (“Merck Canada”) affirms its position regarding use of ivermectin during the COVID-19 pandemic. Merck scientists continue to carefully examine the findings of all available and emerging studies of ivermectin for the treatment of COVID-19 for evidence of efficacy and safety. It is important to note that, to-date, our analysis has identified:

- No scientific basis for a potential therapeutic effect against COVID-19 from pre-clinical studies;
- No meaningful evidence for clinical activity or clinical efficacy in patients with COVID-19 disease, and;
- A concerning lack of safety data in the majority of studies.

We do not believe that the data available support the safety and efficacy of ivermectin beyond the doses and populations indicated in the regulatory agency-approved product monograph.

Indications and Usage for STROMEKTOL® (ivermectin)

STROMEKTOL® is indicated for the treatment of:

- intestinal strongyloidiasis;
- onchocerciasis;

SELECTED SAFETY INFORMATION FOR STROMEKTOL®

Contraindications

STROMEKTOL is contraindicated in patients who are hypersensitive to any component of this product.

Warnings and Precautions

Rarely, patients who are also heavily infected with *Loa loa* may develop a serious or even fatal encephalopathy either spontaneously or following treatment with an effective microfilaricide. In these patients, the following adverse experiences have also been reported: pain (including neck and back pain), red eye, conjunctival hemorrhage, dyspnea, urinary and/or fecal incontinence, difficulty in standing/walking, mental status changes, confusion, lethargy, stupor, seizures, or coma. This syndrome has been seen very rarely following the use of STROMEKTOL®. In individuals who warrant treatment with STROMEKTOL® for any reason and have had significant exposure to *Loa loa*-endemic areas of West or Central Africa, pretreatment assessment for loiasis and careful post-treatment follow-up should be implemented. After treatment with microfilaricidal drugs, patients with hyperreactive onchodermatitis (sowda) may be more likely than others to experience severe adverse reactions, especially edema and aggravation of onchodermatitis

Onchocerciasis

STROMEKTOL® has no activity against adult *Onchocerca volvulus* parasites. The adult parasites reside in subcutaneous nodules which are infrequently palpable. Surgical excision of these nodules (nodulectomy) may be considered in the management of patients with onchocerciasis, since this procedure will eliminate the microfilariae-producing adult parasites. Alternatively repeated follow-up and retreatment with STROMEKTOL® may be required.

Historical data have shown that microfilaricidal drugs, such as diethylcarbamazine citrate (DEC), might cause cutaneous and/or systemic reactions of varying severity (the Mazzotti reaction) and ophthalmological reactions in patients with onchocerciasis. These reactions are probably due to allergic and inflammatory responses to the death of microfilariae. Patients treated with STROMEKTOL® for onchocerciasis may experience these reactions in addition to clinical adverse reactions possibly, probably, or definitely related to the drug itself.

The treatment of severe Mazzotti reactions has not been subjected to controlled clinical trials. Oral hydration, recumbency, intravenous normal saline, and/or parenteral corticosteroids have been used to treat postural hypotension. Antihistamines and/or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin/acetaminophen (paracetamol) have been used for most mild to moderate cases. No data are available to support the use of STROMEKTOL® prophylactically against onchocerciasis.

For complete information on STROMEKTOL, please consult the [product monograph](#).

About Merck

For more than 125 years, Merck, known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world's most challenging diseases in pursuit of our mission to save and improve lives. We demonstrate our commitment to patients and population health by increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, Merck continues to be at the forefront of research to prevent and treat diseases that threaten people and animals — including cancer, infectious diseases such as HIV and Ebola, and emerging animal diseases — as we aspire to be the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company in the world. For more information about our operations in Canada, visit www.merck.ca and connect with us on [YouTube](#) and [Twitter](#).

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