Valtoco® (diazepam) – New orphan drug approval

- On January 13, 2020, Neurelis announced the FDA approval of Valtoco (diazepam) nasal spray, for the acute treatment of intermittent, stereotypic episodes of frequent seizure activity (ie, seizure clusters, acute repetitive seizures) that are distinct from a patient's usual seizure pattern in patients with epilepsy 6 years of age and older.
    - Valtoco is a scheduled IV controlled substance.
- In the U.S., there are over 3.4 million people with epilepsy, with approximately 200,000 new patients diagnosed each year. About 170,000 patients are at risk for episodes of frequent seizure activity, also known as cluster or acute repetitive seizures.
- Valtoco is the first intranasal formulation of diazepam. Diazepam is also available generically as an oral tablet, oral solution, rectal gel, and solution for injection.
    - Diazepam oral tablets and solution are approved for the management of anxiety disorders or for the short-term relief of the symptoms of anxiety; acute alcohol withdrawal; adjunct for the relief of skeletal muscle spasm; and adjunctively in convulsive disorders.
    - Diazepam rectal gel is approved for the management of selected, refractory, patients with epilepsy, on stable regimens of anti-epileptic drugs, who require intermittent use of diazepam to control bouts of increased seizure activity.
    - Diazepam solution for injection is approved for the management of anxiety disorders or for the short-term relief of the symptoms of anxiety; acute alcohol withdrawal; adjunct prior to endoscopic procedures; adjunct for the relief of skeletal muscle spasm; adjunct in status epilepticus and severe recurrent convulsive seizures; and as premedication for relief of anxiety and tension in patients who are to undergo surgical procedures or cardioversion.
- The efficacy of Valtoco was established based on the relative bioavailability of Valtoco nasal spray compared to diazepam rectal gel in healthy adults.
- Valtoco carries a boxed warning for risks from concomitant use with opioids.
- Valtoco is contraindicated in patients with known hypersensitivity to diazepam and in patients with acute narrow angle glaucoma.
- Additional warnings and precautions for Valtoco include central nervous system depression, suicidal behavior and ideation, glaucoma, and risk of serious adverse reactions in infants due to benzyl alcohol preservative.
- The most common adverse reactions (≥ 4%) with Valtoco use were somnolence, headache, and nasal discomfort.
- The recommended dose of Valtoco is 0.2 mg/kg or 0.3 mg/kg, depending on the patient's age and weight. For Valtoco 5 mg and 10 mg, doses should be administered as a single spray intranasally into one nostril. Administration of 15 mg and 20 mg doses require two nasal spray devices, one spray into each nostril. A second dose, when required, may be administered at least 4 hours after the initial dose.
    - More than two doses should not be used to treat a single episode. It is recommended that Valtoco be used to treat no more than one episode every five days and no more than five episodes per month.
    - Refer to the Valtoco drug label for additional dosing recommendations.

Continued . . .

- Neurlis' launch plans for Valtoco are pending. Valtoco will be available as a 5 mg, 7.5 mg, or 10 mg nasal spray.