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Cipralex® superior to Paxil® in treating social anxiety disorder

New data released today confirms that Cipralex® (escitalopram) is significantly superior to placebo in the treatment of social anxiety disorder (SAD). At 24 weeks, Cipralex® also showed a significantly superior effect compared to Paxil® (paroxetine) in the treatment of SAD. In addition, Cipralex® showed superior results compared to placebo in preventing relapse and proved to be an excellently tolerated treatment for SAD.

Presented today at the 44th Meeting of the Scandinavian College of Neuro-Psychopharmacology (SCNP), the study demonstrated that Cipralex® 5 and 10 mg/day showed significantly better efficacy than placebo and comparable efficacy to Paxil® 20 mg/day. Additionally, Cipralex® 20 mg/day was significantly superior to 20 mg/day Paxil® ($p=0.008$) at 24 weeks. Furthermore, Cipralex® showed excellent tolerability and fewer patients withdrew from treatment compared to Paxil® and placebo. The number of patients with discontinuation signs and symptoms was significantly lower for any dose of Cipralex® than for Paxil®.

“Previously published studies have shown that Cipralex® is a potent and efficacious new antidepressant with excellent tolerability. Therefore, we are now very pleased to learn that Cipralex® is also highly efficacious compared to Paxil® in the treatment of social anxiety disorder”, says head of Research & Development at Lundbeck, Executive Vice President Claus Braestrup. “We will soon apply for inclusion of social anxiety disorder in the labeling of Cipralex®.”

The study was a multicentre, randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled, active-reference study with five, fixed-dose, parallel treatment groups. The study started with a 1-week single-blind placebo run-in period after which patients were randomised to 24 weeks of double-blind treatment with fixed doses of Cipralex® (5, 10 and 20 mg/day), Paxil® (20 mg/day), or placebo.

Another multinational study presented at the 23rd National Conference of the Anxiety Disorders Association of America showed that Cipralex® is significantly better at preventing relapse in patients suffering from SAD compared to placebo. A 12-week open-label period with flexible doses of Cipralex® was followed by a 24-week continuation period, in which patients who had responded to Cipralex® treatment were randomised to

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either placebo or Cipralex®. The results show good long-term efficacy with Cipralex® in the treatment of SAD, with the risk of relapse being 2.8 times higher for placebo than for Cipralex®-treated patients.

SAD is fear of new and unknown events involving contact with other people. People suffering from social anxiety disorder are afraid of behaving inappropriately or of having an anxiety attack. People therefore avoid exposing themselves to social situations and isolate themselves from the society.

The content of this release will have no influence on the Lundbeck Group's for 2003. The company expects an increase in revenue of approximately 10% compared to 2002, while the operating profit is expected to increase by approximately 12% compared to 2002.

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H. Lundbeck A/S is an international pharmaceutical company engaged in the research and development, production, marketing and sale of drugs for the treatment of psychiatric and neurological disorders. In 2002, the company's revenue was DKK 9.5 billion. The number of employees is approx. 5,100.