U.S. Physicians Slowly Greet New Hepatitis C Treatment Zepatier

March 17, 2016

Merck's new hepatitis C virus (HCV) treatment Zepatier (elbasvir, grazoprevir), which debuted onto markets in January 2016, has not generated much excitement among physicians, at least not yet, according to a new survey by Medscape Medical News.

So far, only about 11 percent of physicians said they would prescribe the new HCV drug to at least half of their patients this year, and only 17 percent of them in the survey said they felt comfortable prescribing the new combo therapy compared to other hep C regimens.

Specialty gastroenterologists, who treat slightly more people living with HCV than their peers, also held reservations about the drug, with only 16 percent saying they would prescribe it to the majority of their patients in 2016.

Currently, Zepatier is approved to treat hep C genotypes 1 through 4 and touts cure rates of more than 90 percent. The drug is also significantly cheaper than rival therapies, costing $54,600 for a standard 12-week course of treatment. The cost for Gilead Sciences' Harvoni (sofosbuvir, ledipasvir) is $94,500. The cost of AbbVie's Viekira Pak (ombitasvir, paritaprevir, ritonavir; dasabuvir) is $83,000.

Accoridng to experts, the reasons for Zepatier's quiet reception are probably a lack of familiarity with the drugs, and the widespread availability of competing therapies.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/article/us-physicians-slowly-greet-new-hepatitis-c-treatment-zepatier