Cost of Gilead’s New Hep C Treatment Combo Harvoni

October 28, 2014 By Connie M. Welch

Gilead’s hep C combo Harvoni comes with high hopes for improved treatment and a cure for hepatitis C, but what about the cost? Over this last year Gilead has been in the hot seat over the price tag of Sovaldi being $1000 a pill.

Harvoni with its combination of ledipasvir and sovaldi which was developed for genotype 1, the most prevalent genotype in the US and the hardest virus strain to fight, still brings question about cost and if insurance providers will grant approval. No doubt Gilead is leading the charge in the battle against hep C, they are also the leading most expensive hep C treatment to date with Harvoni costing $94,500 for standard length of treatment.That’s $1125 per pill.

However, the cost of treatment will vary with length of treatment and the advanced stage of liver disease of each patient. Through clinical trials they have been able to determine not all hep C patients do not require a “one size fits all” treatment regimen. It is estimated that 40 percent of patients may be able to take the drug for 8 weeks, reducing the price to about $63,000.

Less treatment time does not mean less effective, it means improvement has been made that allows patients with lower viral load counts below 6 million, without cirrhosis and treatment-naÃ¯ve to achieve an SVR12, and a new diagnosis, a Cure! This is a huge improvement compared to older traditional treatments.

Treatment range can fluctuate between 8, 12 or 24 weeks. With cost ranging from $63,000 for 8 weeks of treatment, $94,500 for 12 weeks and $189,000 for 24 weeks. But the power packed pill is still cheaper than liver transplant or cost of advanced stage liver disease with its debilitating effects.

What will happen with cost when other pharmaceutical companies get their new hep C treatment approved? With competition in the market it may drive a change in cost of treatment, no one knows for sure.

So what’s up next? AbbVie’s (NYSE-ABBV) interferon-free treatment for genotype 1 is expected to be approved and released in December 2014, for an unknown price. Shortly following in 2015 we continue to expect several other hep C treatments to hit the scene. No doubt these are exciting times to see the tide turn on hepatitis C with more treatment options and higher cure rates than ever before.

With all that said, Gilead continues to provide a stellar assistance and support program in, My Support Path.com

U.S. Patient Support Program

To assist eligible hepatitis C patients in the United States with access to Harvoni, Gilead has added the medicine to its MySupportPath program. The program consists of an integrated offering of support services for patients and providers, among them:

- Call center staffed with associates trained to help patients and their providers with insurance-related needs.
- Education and support, including a 24/7 nursing support service line.
- The Harvoni and Sovaldi Co-pay Coupon Programs, which provide co-pay assistance for eligible patients with private insurance who need assistance paying for out-of-pocket medication costs. Most patients will pay no more than $5 per co-pay.
- The Support Path Patient Assistance Program, which will provide Harvoni and Sovaldi at no charge for eligible patients with no other insurance options.

Gilead also provides support to independent non-profit organizations that provide assistance for eligible federally-insured and privately-insured patients who need help covering out-of-pocket medication costs. To learn more about Support Path for Harvoni or Sovaldi, please visit www.MySupportPath.com or call 1-855-769-7284 between 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Eastern, Monday through Friday.

Are you waiting for Harvoni? Do you have a question or comment about Hep C treatment?
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