

QUTENZA (capsaicin)

Effective Date: 1/28/14

Date Developed: 1/28/14 by Robert Sterling, MD

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Description: Qutenza is a single-use patch (14cm x 20cm) which contains 8% of a synthetic form of capsaicin (a substance found naturally in chili peppers). Capsaicin is an agonist for the transient receptor potential vanilloid 1 receptor (TRPV1), an ion channel-receptor complex expressed on nociceptive nerve fibers in the skin. Topical administration of capsaicin causes an initial enhanced stimulation of the TRPV1-expressing cutaneous nociceptors that may be associated with painful sensations followed by pain relief mediated by a reduction in TRPV1-expressing nociceptive nerve endings, a process that has been described as nociceptor defunctionalization.

Authorization:

Neuropathic pain: Management of neuropathic pain associated with postherpetic neuralgia and diabetic peripheral neuropathy of the feet in adults.

Muscle/Joint pain: Temporary relief of minor aches and pains of muscles and joints associated with simple backache, muscle strains, sprains, arthritis, bruises, or cramps.

NOTE: The following are unlabeled uses and not covered (see the VCHCP policy on Coverage of Prescription Medication for Off-Label use): diabetic neuropathy, treatment of pain associated with psoriasis and intractable pruritis.

Dosing:

Apply patch to most painful areas of the diabetic feet for 30 minutes or other neuropathic pain areas for 60 minutes. For muscle/joint pain apply 1 patch to affected area for up to 8 hours. Maximum: 4 patches/day. Do not use for >5 consecutive days. Treatment may be repeated ≥ 3 months as needed for return of pain (do not apply more frequently than every 3 months). Area should be pretreated with a topical anesthetic prior to patch application.

Dosage Forms, Patch: 8%

PRECAUTIONS: do not expose to eyes or mucous membranes; caution patient that pain may increase following initiation of treatment but will decrease thereafter; application site irritation/sensitivity

DRUG INTERACTIONS: No known significant interactions.

REFERENCES

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