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Pharmacokinetic evaluation of levocetirizine.

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Source

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Abstract

Introduction: There have recently been guidelines developed for the diagnosis and treatment of rhinitis and urticaria. For both conditions, second-generation antihistamines remain as the first-line therapy. Areas covered: The article presents the current pharmacology, chemical properties, pharmacokinetics and metabolism of levocetirizine. The article also reviews the clinical efficacy of levocetirizine for seasonal allergic and perennial rhinitis, as well as chronic urticaria. The article is formed through the review of all the published literature in English retrieved from the PubMed/MEDLINE database between 1966 and March 2011 using the search terms: levocetirizine, allergic rhinitis, chronic urticaria and antihistamine. Furthermore, the article also reviews data provided by the manufacturer in addition to reports from governmental agencies. Expert opinion: Levocetirizine has several pharmacokinetic properties that are desirable for an antihistamine providing a combination of both potency and safety. Its

clinical advantages are derived from its rapid and extensive absorption, limited distribution and its very low degree of metabolism. Furthermore, levocetirizine scores very highly in terms of clinical efficacy as well as in patient/physician satisfaction studies. Given the lack of large multi-center studies that compare the treatment options for urticaria, clinicians must rely on potency studies when choosing treatment and levocetirizine does score very highly. However, other potent skin antihistamines, such as desloratadine or fexofenadine, should be preferred for patients who have a strict contraindication to the sedative effects of the drug.