

NEW ZEALAND DATA SHEET

SERETIDE[®] Inhaler (with counter)

Salmeterol xinafoate/fluticasone propionate

Presentation

SERETIDE Inhaler 25mcg/50mcg

Each single actuation provides salmeterol xinafoate equivalent to 25 micrograms of salmeterol and 50 micrograms of fluticasone propionate.

SERETIDE Inhaler 25mcg/125mcg

Each single actuation provides salmeterol xinafoate equivalent to 25 micrograms of salmeterol and 125 micrograms of fluticasone propionate.

SERETIDE Inhaler 25mcg/250mcg

Each single actuation provides salmeterol xinafoate equivalent to 25 micrograms of salmeterol and 250 micrograms of fluticasone propionate.

Pharmaceutical form

Inhalation, aerosol.

Indications

Asthma

SERETIDE is indicated for the regular treatment of reversible airways obstruction in adults and children with asthma, where use of a combination product (bronchodilator and inhaled corticosteroid) is appropriate.

This may include:

Patients on effective maintenance doses of both long-acting beta-agonists and inhaled corticosteroids using separate products.

Patients who are not adequately controlled on current inhaled corticosteroid therapy.

Patients who are not adequately controlled on “as needed” short-acting beta-agonists, as an alternative to initiation of maintenance therapy with moderate or high doses of inhaled corticosteroid alone.

SERETIDE should not typically be used for the initial management of asthma, unless symptoms are severely uncontrolled, nor in patients whose asthma can be managed by occasional use of short-acting beta-2 agonists.

SERETIDE should not be used in the treatment of acute asthmatic symptoms.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

SERETIDE is indicated for the symptomatic treatment of patients with moderate to severe COPD (pre-bronchodilator FEV₁<60% predicted normal), who have significant symptoms despite bronchodilator therapy.

Dosage and Administration

SERETIDE Inhaler is for inhalation only.

Patients should be made aware that SERETIDE Inhaler must be used regularly for optimum benefit, even when asymptomatic. Patients must be warned not to stop therapy or reduce it without medical advice, even if they feel better on SERETIDE.

Patients should be regularly reassessed by a doctor, so that the strength of SERETIDE they are receiving remains optimal and is only changed on medical advice.

The dose should be titrated to the lowest dose at which effective control of symptoms is maintained. Where effective control of symptoms is maintained with the lowest strength of the SERETIDE inhaler (25/50mcg) given twice daily, the next step could include a test of inhaled corticosteroid alone. As an alternative, patients requiring a long-acting beta-2 agonist could be titrated to SERETIDE given once daily if, in the opinion of the prescriber, it would be adequate to maintain disease control. In the event of once daily dosing when the patient has a history of nocturnal symptoms, the dose should be given at night; and when the patient has a history of mainly day-time symptoms, the dose should be given in the morning.

Regular review of patients as treatment is stepped down is important.

Asthma

Patients should be given the strength of SERETIDE containing the appropriate fluticasone propionate dosage for the severity of their disease.

Patients should be instructed not to take additional doses to treat symptoms but to take a short-acting inhaled beta-2 agonist.

Adults and adolescents 12 years and older:

Two inhalations of 25mcg salmeterol and 50mcg fluticasone propionate twice daily.

or

Two inhalations of 25mcg salmeterol and 125mcg fluticasone propionate twice daily.

or

Two inhalations of 25mcg salmeterol and 250mcg fluticasone propionate twice daily.

Children 4 years and older:

Two inhalations of 25mcg salmeterol and 50mcg fluticasone propionate twice daily.

Children under 4 years of age:

There are insufficient clinical data at present to recommend for use of SERETIDE in children aged under 4 years.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

2 inhalations of 25/125mcg twice daily.

For patients who require additional symptomatic control replace the 25/125mcg strength with the 25/250mcg strength.

The maximum daily dose is 2 inhalations 25/250mcg twice daily (see Further Information – Clinical trial data section).

Special patient groups:

There is no need to adjust the dose in elderly patients or in those with renal or hepatic impairment.

Contra-indications

SERETIDE is contraindicated in patients with a history of hypersensitivity to salmeterol xinafoate, fluticasone propionate or any of the excipients (see Pharmaceutical Particulars – List of Excipients section).

Warnings and Precautions

Use in asthma patients

The management of asthma should normally follow a stepwise programme and patient response should be monitored clinically and by lung function tests.

SERETIDE should not be initiated in patients during an exacerbation, or if they have unstable or acutely deteriorating asthma.

SERETIDE Inhaler is not for relief of acute symptoms for which a fast and short-acting bronchodilator (e.g. salbutamol) is required. Patients should be advised to have their relief medication available at all times.

Asthma-related adverse events

Serious asthma-related adverse events and exacerbations may occur during treatment with SERETIDE. Patients should be asked to continue treatment but to seek medical advice if asthma symptoms remain uncontrolled or worsen after initiation of SERETIDE.

Deterioration of asthma control

Increasing use of short-acting bronchodilators to relieve symptoms indicates deterioration of control.

Sudden and progressive deterioration in control of asthma is potentially life-threatening and the patient should be reviewed by a physician. Consideration should be given to increasing corticosteroid therapy. Also, where the current dosage of SERETIDE has failed to give adequate control of ROAD, the patient should be reviewed by a physician.

Patients should be advised to seek medical attention if sudden deterioration of their asthma occurs, if they find that short-acting relief bronchodilator treatment becomes less effective or if they need more inhalations than usual.

Use in COPD patients

There was an increased reporting of pneumonia in studies of patients with COPD receiving Seretide (see Adverse Effects section). Physicians should remain vigilant for the possible development of pneumonia in patients with COPD as the clinical features of pneumonia and exacerbation frequently overlap.

For patients with asthma or COPD, consideration should be given to additional corticosteroid therapies, and administration of antibiotics if exacerbation is associated with an infection.

Discontinuation

Once asthma symptoms are controlled, consideration may be given to gradually reducing the dose of SERETIDE. Regular review of patients as treatment is stepped down is important.

Treatment with SERETIDE should not be stopped abruptly in patients with asthma due to risk of exacerbation, therapy should be titrated-down under physician supervision.

For patients with COPD cessation of therapy may be associated with symptomatic decompensation and should be supervised by a physician.

Corticosteroids

SERETIDE contains an inhaled corticosteroid (fluticasone propionate)

Systemic effects may occur with any inhaled corticosteroid, particularly at high doses prescribed for long periods; however these effects are much less likely to occur than with oral corticosteroids (see Overdose section). Possible systemic effects include Cushing's syndrome, Cushingoid features, adrenal suppression, growth retardation in children and adolescents, decrease in bone mineral density, cataract and glaucoma. Therefore, it is important, that the patient is reviewed regularly and the dose of inhaled corticosteroid is titrated to the lowest dose at which effective control is maintained.

Certain individuals can show greater susceptibility to the effects of inhaled corticosteroid than do most patients.

The possibility of impaired adrenal response should always be borne in mind in emergency and elective situations likely to produce stress and appropriate corticosteroid treatment considered (see Overdose section).

Because of the possibility of impaired adrenal response, patients transferring from oral steroid therapy to inhaled fluticasone propionate therapy should be treated with special care, and adrenocortical function regularly monitored.

Following introduction of inhaled fluticasone propionate, withdrawal of systemic therapy should be gradual and patients encouraged to carry a steroid warning card indicating the possible need for additional therapy in times of stress.

It is recommended that the height of children receiving prolonged treatment with inhaled corticosteroid is regularly monitored.

In rare cases inhaled therapy may unmask underlying eosinophilic conditions (e.g. Churg Strauss syndrome). These cases have usually been associated with reduction or withdrawal of oral corticosteroid therapy. A direct causal relationship has not been established.

Patients with other medical conditions

Pulmonary tuberculosis

As with all inhaled medication containing corticosteroids, SERETIDE should be administered with caution in patients with active or quiescent pulmonary tuberculosis.

Thyrotoxicosis

SERETIDE should be administered with caution in patients with thyrotoxicosis.

Cardiovascular disease

Cardiovascular effects, such as increases in systolic blood pressure and heart rate, may occasionally be seen with all sympathomimetic drugs, especially at higher than therapeutic doses. Rarely, SERETIDE may cause cardiac arrhythmias e.g. supraventricular tachycardia, extrasystoles and atrial fibrillation. Therefore, SERETIDE should be used with caution in patients with pre-existing cardiovascular disorders.

Lower serum potassium

A transient decrease in serum potassium may occur with all sympathomimetic drugs at higher therapeutic doses. Therefore, SERETIDE should be used with caution in patients predisposed to low levels of serum potassium.

Diabetes mellitus

There have been very rare reports of increases in blood glucose levels (see Adverse Effects section) and this should be considered when prescribing to patients with a history of diabetes mellitus.

Drug interaction potential

Ritonavir

During post-marketing use, there have been reports of clinically significant drug interactions in patients receiving fluticasone propionate and ritonavir, resulting in systemic corticosteroid effects including Cushing's syndrome and adrenal suppression. Therefore, concomitant use of fluticasone propionate and ritonavir should be avoided, unless the potential benefit to the patient outweighs the risk of systemic corticosteroid side-effects (see Interactions section).

CYP3A4 inhibitors

It was observed in a drug interaction study that concomitant use of systemic ketoconazole increases exposure to salmeterol. This may lead to prolongation in the QTc interval. Caution should be exercised when strong CYP3A4 inhibitors (e.g. ketoconazole) are co-administered with salmeterol. (see Interactions and Further Information – Pharmacokinetic Properties sections).

Spacer Devices

Patients that have poor inhaler technique may benefit from the consistent use of a spacer device with their metered dose inhaler (MDI or 'puffer'). Use of a spacer will also decrease the amount of drug deposited in the mouth and back of the throat, and therefore reduce the incidence of local side effects such as 'thrush' and a hoarse voice.

A change in the make of spacer may be associated with alterations in the amount of drug delivered to the lungs. The clinical significance of these alterations is uncertain. However, in these situations, the person should be monitored for any loss of asthma control.

If using a spacer, there are two potential techniques that can be described to the patient:

1. The patient should be instructed to actuate the inhaler into the spacer and then slowly breathe in as far as possible. They should hold their breath for as long as comfortable, before breathing out slowly. This should be repeated for each actuation of the drug into the spacer. Any delays between actuation and inhalation should be kept to a minimum.

2. Alternatively the patient can be advised to breathe normally in and out via the spacer for about 6 breaths per actuation of the inhaler.

Static on the walls of the spacer may cause variability in drug delivery. Patients should be instructed to wash the spacer in warm water and detergent and allow it to air dry without rinsing or drying with a cloth. This should be performed before initial use of the spacer and at least monthly thereafter.

Use in pregnancy and lactation

Pregnancy

Administration of SERETIDE during pregnancy and lactation should only be considered if the expected benefit to the mother is greater than any possible risk to the foetus or child.

There is insufficient experience of the use of salmeterol xinafoate and fluticasone propionate in human pregnancy. Reproductive toxicity studies in animals, either with single agent or in combination, revealed the foetal effects expected at excessive systemic exposure levels of a potent beta-2-adrenoreceptor agonist and glucocorticosteroid.

Lactation

Administration of SERETIDE in breast-feeding mothers should only be considered if the expected benefit to the mother is greater than any possible risk to the foetus or child.

There is insufficient experience of the use of salmeterol xinafoate and fluticasone propionate in human lactation. Salmeterol and fluticasone propionate concentrations in plasma after inhaled therapeutic doses are very low and therefore concentrations in human breast milk are likely to be correspondingly low. This is supported by studies in lactating animals, in which low agent concentrations were measured in milk. There are no data available for human breast milk.

Effects on Ability to Drive and Use Machines

There have been no specific studies of the effect of SERETIDE on the above activities, but the pharmacology of both agents does not indicate any effect.

Interactions

Salmeterol

Beta-blockers

Both non-selective and selective β -blockers should be avoided, unless there are compelling reasons for their use.

CYP3A4 inhibitors

Co-administration of ketoconazole and salmeterol resulted in a significant increase in plasma salmeterol exposure (1.4-fold C_{max} and 15-fold AUC). This may lead to prolongation of the QTc interval. Due to the potential increased risk of cardiovascular adverse events, the concomitant use of salmeterol with strong CYP3A4 inhibitors (e.g. ketoconazole, atazanavir, ritonavir, clarithromycin, indinavir, itraconazole, nefazodone, nelfinavir and saquinavir) is not recommended (see Warnings and Precautions and Further Information - Pharmacokinetic Properties sections).

Fluticasone propionate

Under normal circumstances, low plasma concentrations of fluticasone propionate are achieved after inhaled dosing, due to extensive first pass metabolism and high systemic clearance mediated by cytochrome P450 3A4 in the gut and liver. Hence, clinically significant drug interactions mediated by fluticasone propionate are unlikely.

Ritonavir

A drug interaction study in healthy subjects has shown that ritonavir (a highly potent cytochrome P450 3A4 inhibitor) can greatly increase fluticasone propionate plasma concentrations, resulting in markedly reduced serum cortisol concentrations. During post-marketing use, there have been reports of clinically significant drug interactions in patients receiving intranasal or inhaled fluticasone propionate and ritonavir, resulting in systemic corticosteroid effects including Cushing's syndrome and adrenal suppression. Therefore, concomitant use of fluticasone propionate and ritonavir should be avoided, unless the potential benefit to the patient outweighs the risk of systemic corticosteroid side-effects.

CYP3A4 inhibitors

Studies have shown that other inhibitors of cytochrome P450 3A4 produce negligible (erythromycin) and minor (ketoconazole) increases in systemic exposure to fluticasone propionate without notable reductions in serum cortisol concentrations. Nevertheless, care is advised when co-administering potent cytochrome P450 3A4 inhibitors (e.g. ketoconazole) as there is potential for increased systemic exposure to fluticasone propionate.

Adverse Effects

As SERETIDE contains salmeterol and fluticasone propionate, the type and severity of adverse reactions associated with each of the compounds may be expected.

As with other inhalation therapy paradoxical bronchospasm may occur with an immediate increase in wheezing after dosing. This should be treated immediately with a fast and short-acting inhaled bronchodilator. SERETIDE Inhaler should be discontinued immediately, the patient assessed and alternative therapy instituted if necessary.

Adverse events which have been associated with salmeterol and/or fluticasone propionate are listed below by system organ class and frequency. Frequencies are defined as:

Very common	(>1/10)
Common	(>1/100 and <1/10)
Uncommon	(>1/1000 and <1/100)
Rare	(>1/10,000 and <1/1000)
Very rare	(<1/10,000) including isolated reports

The pharmacological side effects of beta-2-agonist treatment, such as tremor, palpitations and headache, have been reported, but tend to be transient and reduce with regular therapy.

Due to the fluticasone propionate component hoarseness and candidiasis (thrush) of the mouth and throat can occur in some patients. Both hoarseness and incidence of candidiasis may be reduced by gargling with water after use of SERETIDE Inhaler.

Symptomatic candidiasis can be treated with topical anti-fungal therapy whilst still continuing with SERETIDE Inhaler.

System Organ Class	Frequency	Event
Cardiac disorders	Common	Palpitations
	Uncommon	Tachycardia
	Very rare	Cardiac arrhythmias (including atrial fibrillation, supraventricular tachycardia and extrasystoles)
Endocrine disorders	Very rare	Cushing's syndrome

		Cushingoid features Adrenal suppression Growth retardation in children and adolescents Decreased bone mineral density
Eye disorders	Very rare	Cataract Glaucoma
Immune system disorders	Uncommon Very rare	Hypersensitivity reactions Rash Cutaneous hypersensitivity reactions Anaphylactic reactions including anaphylactic shock Angioedema including facial and oropharyngeal oedema Respiratory symptoms including dyspnoea and/or bronchospasm
Infections and infestations	Common	Candidiasis of the mouth and throat Pneumonia Bronchitis
Metabolism and nutritional disorders	Common Very rare	Hypokalaemia Hyperglycaemia
Musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders	Common Very rare	Muscle cramps Traumatic fractures Arthralgia Myalgia
Nervous system disorders	Very common Common	Headache Tremor
Psychiatric disorders	Very rare	Anxiety Sleep disorders Behavioural changes including hyperactivity and irritability (predominantly in children)
Respiratory, thoracic and mediastinal disorders	Very common Common	Nasopharyngitis Throat irritation

	Very rare	Hoarseness/dysphoria Sinusitis Oropharyngeal irritation Paradoxical bronchospasm
Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders	Common	Contusions

Overdose

It is not recommended that patients receive higher than approved doses of Seretide. It is important to review therapy regularly and titrate down to the lowest approved dose at which effective control of disease is maintained (see Dosage and Administration section)

The available information on overdose with Seretide, salmeterol and/or fluticasone propionate is given below:

Salmeterol

The expected symptoms and signs of salmeterol overdosage are those typical of excessive beta-2-adrenergic stimulation, including tremor, headache, tachycardia, increases in systolic blood pressure and hypokalaemia and raised blood glucose levels. The preferred antidote for overdosage with salmeterol is a cardioselective beta-blocking agent. However, these agents should be used with caution in patients with a history of bronchospasm.

If SERETIDE therapy has to be withdrawn due to overdose of the beta-agonist component of the medicine (salmeterol), provision of appropriate replacement corticosteroid therapy should be considered.

Fluticasone propionate

Acute inhalation of fluticasone propionate doses in excess of those approved may lead to temporary suppression of the hypothalamic-pituitary adrenal axis. This does not usually require emergency action as normal adrenal function typically recovers within a few days.

If higher than approved doses of Seretide are continued over prolonged periods, significant adrenocortical suppression is possible. There have been very rare reports of acute adrenal crisis, mainly occurring in children exposed to higher than approved doses over prolonged periods (several months or years); observed features have included hypoglycaemia associated with decreased consciousness and/or convulsions. Situations which could potentially trigger acute adrenal crisis include exposure to trauma, surgery, infection or any rapid reduction in the dosage of the inhaled fluticasone propionate component.

Further Information

Mechanism of action

SERETIDE contains salmeterol and fluticasone propionate which have differing modes of action. Salmeterol provides symptomatic relief while fluticasone propionate improves lung function and prevents exacerbations of the condition. SERETIDE can offer a more convenient regime for patients on concurrent long-acting beta-agonist and inhaled corticosteroid therapy. The respective mechanisms of action of both agents are discussed below:

Salmeterol

Salmeterol is a selective long-acting (12 hour) beta-2-adrenoceptor agonist with a long side chain which binds to the exo-site of the receptor.

These pharmacological properties of salmeterol offer a slower onset of action, but more effective protection against histamine-induced bronchoconstriction and produce a longer duration of bronchodilation, lasting for approximately 12 hours, than recommended doses of conventional short-acting beta-2-agonists.

In vitro tests have shown salmeterol is a potent and long-lasting inhibitor of the release, from human lung, of mast cell mediators such as histamine, leukotrienes and prostaglandin D₂.

In man, salmeterol inhibits the early and late phase response to inhaled allergen; the latter persisting for over 30 hours after a single dose when the bronchodilator effect is no longer evident. Single dosing with salmeterol attenuates bronchial hyper-responsiveness. These properties indicate that salmeterol has additional non-bronchodilator activity but the full clinical significance is not yet clear. This mechanism is different from the anti-inflammatory effect of corticosteroids.

Fluticasone propionate

Fluticasone propionate given by inhalation at recommended doses has a potent glucocorticoid anti-inflammatory action within the lungs, resulting in reduced symptoms and exacerbations of asthma, without the adverse effects observed when corticosteroids are administered systemically.

Daily output of adrenocortical hormones usually remain within the normal range during chronic treatment with inhaled fluticasone propionate, even at the highest recommended doses in children and adults. After transfer from other inhaled steroids, the daily output gradually improves despite past and present intermittent use of oral steroids, thus demonstrating return of normal adrenal function on inhaled fluticasone propionate. The adrenal reserve also remains normal during chronic treatment, as measured by a normal increment on a stimulation test. However, any residual impairment of adrenal reserve from previous treatment may persist for a considerable time and should be borne in mind (see Warnings and Precautions section).

Pharmacokinetic Properties

There is no evidence in animal or human subjects that the administration of salmeterol and fluticasone propionate together by the inhaled route affects the pharmacokinetics of either component.

For pharmacokinetic purposes therefore each component can be considered separately.

Even though plasma levels of SERETIDE are very low, potential interactions with other substrates and inhibitors of CYP 3A4 cannot be excluded.

Salmeterol

Salmeterol acts locally in the lung therefore plasma levels are not an indication of therapeutic effects. In addition there are only limited data available on the pharmacokinetics of salmeterol because of the technical difficulty of assaying the agent in plasma due to the low plasma concentrations at therapeutic doses (approximately 200pg/mL or less) achieved after inhaled dosing. After regular dosing with salmeterol xinafoate, hydroxynaphthoic acid can be detected in the systemic circulation, reaching steady state concentrations of approximately 100ng/mL. These concentrations are up to 1000 fold lower than steady state levels observed in toxicity studies. No detrimental effects have been seen following long-term regular dosing (more than 12 months) in patients with airway obstruction.

In a placebo-controlled, crossover drug interaction study in 15 healthy subjects, co-administration of salmeterol (50 mcg twice daily inhaled) and the CYP3A4 inhibitor ketoconazole (400 mg once daily orally) for 7 days resulted in a significant increase in plasma salmeterol exposure (1.4-fold C_{max} and 15-fold AUC). There was no increase in salmeterol accumulation with repeat dosing. Three subjects were withdrawn from salmeterol and ketoconazole co-administration due to QTc prolongation or palpitations with sinus tachycardia. In the remaining 12 subjects, co-administration of salmeterol and ketoconazole did not result in a clinically significant effect on heart rate, blood potassium or QTc duration. (see Special Warnings and Precautions for Use, and Interactions).

Fluticasone propionate

The absolute bioavailability of fluticasone propionate for each of the available inhaler devices has been estimated from within and between study comparisons of inhaled and intravenous pharmacokinetic data. In healthy adult subjects the absolute bioavailability has been estimated for fluticasone propionate Accuhaler (7.8%), fluticasone propionate Inhaler (10.9%), Seretide Inhaler (5.3%) and Seretide Accuhaler (5.5%) respectively. In patients with ROAD or COPD a lesser degree of systemic exposure to inhaled fluticasone propionate has been observed. Systemic absorption occurs mainly through the lungs and is initially rapid then prolonged. The remainder of the inhaled dose may be swallowed but contributes minimally to systemic exposure due to the low aqueous solubility and pre-systemic metabolism, resulting in oral

availability of less than 1%. There is a linear increase in systemic exposure with increasing inhaled dose. The disposition of fluticasone propionate is characterised by high plasma clearance (1150mL/min), a large volume of distribution at steady-state (approximately 300L) and a terminal half-life of approximately 8 hours. Plasma protein binding is moderately high (91%). Fluticasone propionate is cleared very rapidly from the systemic circulation, principally by metabolism to an inactive carboxylic acid metabolite, by the cytochrome P450 enzyme CYP3A4.

The renal clearance of fluticasone propionate is negligible (<0.2%) and less than 5% as the metabolite. Care should be taken when co-administering known CYP3A4 inhibitors, as there is potential for increased systemic exposure to fluticasone propionate.

Preclinical Safety Data

Salmeterol xinafoate and fluticasone propionate have been extensively evaluated in animal toxicity tests. Significant toxicities occurred only at doses in excess of those recommended for human use and were those expected for a potent beta-2adrenoreceptor agonist and glucocorticosteroid.

In long term studies, salmeterol xinafoate induced benign tumours of smooth muscle in the mesovarium of rats and the uterus of mice. Rodents are sensitive to the formation of these pharmacologically-induced tumours. Salmeterol is not considered to represent a significant oncogenic hazard to man.

Co-administration of salmeterol and fluticasone propionate resulted in some cardiovascular interactions at high doses. In rats, mild atrial myocarditis and focal coronary arteritis were transient effects that resolved with regular dosing. In dogs, heart rate increases were greater after co-administration than after salmeterol alone. No clinically relevant serious adverse cardiac effects have been observed in studies in man.

Co-administration did not modify other class-related toxicities in animals.

Extensive clinical experience with agents in these classes has revealed no evidence that the effects are relevant at therapeutic doses. Neither salmeterol xinafoate nor fluticasone propionate has shown any potential for genetic toxicity.

The non-CFC propellant, HFA134a, has been shown to have no toxic effect at very high vapour concentrations, far in excess of those likely to be experienced by patients, in a wide range of animal species exposed daily for periods of two years.

Clinical trial data

Symptomatic COPD patients who demonstrated less than 10% reversibility to a short acting beta-2-agonist:

Placebo-controlled clinical trials, over 6 and 12 months, have shown that regular use of SERETIDE 50/500 micrograms rapidly and significantly improves lung function, significantly reduced breathlessness and the use of relief medication. Over a 12-month period the risk of COPD exacerbations and the need for additional courses of oral corticosteroids was significantly reduced. There were also significant improvements in health status.

SERETIDE 50/500 micrograms was effective in improving lung function, health status and reducing the risk of COPD exacerbations, in both current and ex-smokers.

Symptomatic COPD patients without restriction to 10% reversibility to a short acting beta-2-agonist:

Placebo-controlled clinical trials, over 6 months, have shown that regular use of both SERETIDE 50/250 and 50/500 micrograms rapidly and significantly improves lung function, significantly reduced breathlessness and the use of relief medication. There were also significant improvements in health status.

TORCH study (Towards a Revolution in COPD Health):

TORCH was a 3 year study to assess the effect of treatment with Seretide 50/500mcg twice daily, fluticasone propionate 500mcg twice daily, salmeterol 50mcg twice daily, or placebo on all-cause mortality in patients with COPD. Patients with moderate to severe COPD with a baseline (pre-bronchodilator) FEV₁ <60% of predicted normal were randomised to double-blind medication. During the study, patients were permitted usual COPD therapy with the exception of other inhaled corticosteroids, long-acting bronchodilators, and long-term systemic corticosteroids. Survival status at 3 years was determined for all patients regardless of withdrawal from study medication. The primary endpoint was reduction in all-cause mortality at 3 years for Seretide vs placebo.

	Placebo N=1524	Salmeterol 50 N=1521	Fluticasone propionate 500 N=1534	Seretide 50/500 N=1533
All-cause mortality at 3 years				
Number of deaths (%)	231 (15.2%)	205 (13.5%)	246 (16.0%)	193 (12.6%)
Hazard Ratio vs Placebo (CIs)	N/A	0.879 (0.73, 1.06)	1.060 (0.89, 1.27)	0.825 (0.68, 1.00)
P value		0.180	0.525	0.052 ¹
Hazard ratio Seretide 50/500	N/A	0.932	0.774	N/A

vs components (CIs)		(0.77, 1.13)	(0.64, 0.93)	
P value		0.481	0.007	

1. P value adjusted for 2 interim analyses on the primary efficacy comparison from a log-rank analysis stratified by smoking status.

There was a trend towards improved survival in subjects treated with Seretide compared with placebo over 3 years however this did not achieve the statistical significance level $p \leq 0.05$. The percentage of patients who died within 3 years due to COPD-related causes was 6.0% for placebo, 6.1% for salmeterol, 6.9% for FP and 4.7% for Seretide.

Seretide reduced the rate of moderate to severe COPD exacerbations by 25% ($p < 0.001$) compared with placebo. Seretide reduced the exacerbation rate by 12% compared with salmeterol ($p = 0.002$) and 9% compared with fluticasone propionate ($p = 0.024$).

Health Related Quality of Life, as measured by the St George's Respiratory Questionnaire (SGRQ) was improved by all active treatments in comparison with placebo. The average improvement over 3 years for Seretide compared with placebo was -3.1 units ($p < 0.001$), compared with salmeterol was -2.2 units ($p < 0.001$) and compared with fluticasone propionate was -1.2 units ($p = 0.017$). The odds of Seretide subjects achieving a clinically significant improvement in health status (ie. ≥ 4 point reduction in SGRQ) was 86% greater compared to placebo ($p < 0.001$), 40% greater compared to salmeterol ($p < 0.001$) and 24% greater compared to fluticasone propionate ($p = 0.006$).

Over the 3 year treatment period, FEV₁ values were higher in subjects treated with Seretide than those treated with placebo (average difference over 3 years 92 mL, $p < 0.001$). Seretide was also more effective than salmeterol or fluticasone propionate in improving FEV₁ (average difference 50 mL, $p < 0.001$ for salmeterol and 44 mL, $p < 0.001$ for fluticasone propionate).

The estimated 3 year probability of having pneumonia reported as an adverse event was 12.3% for placebo, 13.3% for salmeterol, 18.3% for fluticasone propionate and 19.6% for Seretide (Hazard ratio for Seretide vs placebo: 1.64, $p < 0.001$). There was no increase in pneumonia related deaths; deaths while on treatment that were adjudicated as primarily due to pneumonia were 7 for placebo, 9 for salmeterol, 13 for fluticasone propionate and 8 for Seretide. There was no significant difference in probability of bone fracture between treatments. The incidence of adverse events of eye disorders, bone disorders, and HPA axis disorders was low and there was no difference observed between treatments. There was no evidence of an increase in cardiac adverse events in the treatment groups receiving salmeterol.

The all-cause mortality findings from TORCH were further supported by data from another study, INSPIRE, which was a 2 year randomised (n=1323), double blind study comparing the effects of Seretide 50/500mcg twice daily with tiotropium 18mcg once daily in COPD patients with post bronchodilator FEV₁ $< 50\%$ predicted normal. All-cause mortality was a safety end point in this study. The results showed that for time to death on-treatment, there was a 52% reduction in the risk of dying at anytime on therapy over the 2 year study period for Seretide compared to tiotropium ($p = 0.012$).

Pharmaceutical particulars

List of Excipients

Norflurane HFA 134a (a CFC-Free propellant).

Incompatibilities

None reported.

Shelf Life

2 years.

Special Precautions for Storage

Store below 30°C. Protect from frost and direct sunlight.

As with most inhaled medications in pressurised canisters, the therapeutic effect of this medication may decrease when the canister is cold.

The canister should not be punctured, broken or burnt even when apparently empty.

Nature and Contents of Container

SERETIDE Inhaler comprises a suspension of salmeterol xinafoate and fluticasone propionate in the non-CFC propellant HFA 134a. The suspension is contained in an aluminium alloy can sealed with a metering valve. The canisters are fitted into plastic actuators incorporating an atomising orifice and fitted with dustcaps. The canister has a counter attached to it, which shows how many actuations of medicine are left. The number of actuations left will show through a window in the back of the plastic actuator. SERETIDE Inhaler has been formulated in three strengths and one pack size, delivering 120 actuations per inhaler.

Instructions for Use/Handling

For detailed instructions for use, refer to the Patient Information leaflet.

Before using for the first time, the patient should test the inhaler by releasing puffs into the air until the counter reads 120 to make sure that it works.

If the inhaler has not been used for a week or more, the patient should release one puff into the air before using.

Each time a puff is released the number on the counter will count down by one. In some cases dropping the inhaler may cause the counter to count down.

How to use the inhaler:

1. Remove the mouthpiece cover by gently squeezing the sides of the cover and check the mouthpiece inside and outside to see that it is clean. Check inside and outside of the inhaler including the mouthpiece for the presence of loose objects.
2. Shake the inhaler well to ensure that any loose objects are removed and that the contents of the inhaler are evenly mixed.
3. Hold the inhaler upright between fingers and thumb with your thumb on the base, below the mouthpiece.
4. Breathe out as far as is comfortable and then place the mouthpiece in your mouth between your teeth and close your lips around it, but do not bite it.
5. Just after starting to breathe in through your mouth, press down on the top of the inhaler to release salmeterol and fluticasone propionate, while still breathing in steadily and deeply.
6. While holding your breath, take the inhaler from your mouth and take your finger from the top of the inhaler. Continue holding your breath for as long as is comfortable.
7. To take the second inhalation keep the inhaler upright and wait about half a minute before repeating steps 2 to 6.
8. Immediately replace the mouthpiece cover in the correct position. The cap when correctly fitted will click into position. If it does not click into place, turn the cap the other way round and try again. Do not use excessive force.

DO NOT PUT THE METAL CANISTER INTO WATER.

Medicines classification

Prescription Only Medicine

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