

First scorpion sting drug receives FDA approval

August 5 2011, by Deborah Braconnier



The FDA has announced the approval of Anascorp, the first drug designed to specifically treat and counteract the venomous stings of scorpions.

The centruroides scorpion is the most common type of scorpion found in the United States and is responsible for an average 11000 stings a year in Arizona alone. In 2009, 17000 stings were reported to the Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center.

Scorpion stings can cause reactions of a serious nature such as [shortness of breath](#), breathing problems, blurred vision, fluid in the lungs, excess saliva, trouble swallowing, slurred speech, muscle twitching, loss of muscle coordination and difficulty walking. Children and infants are at

the greatest risk of severe reactions.

The new drug was the first drug to be fully developed in a Latin American country, in this case Mexico, and then approved by the [FDA](#). Anascorp is derived from the horse plasma taken from horses that have received a [scorpion venom](#) immunization and may cause [allergic reactions](#) in individuals who have a sensitivity to horse proteins.

Anascorp is considered an “orphan” drug and received priority review. An orphan drug is one that is specifically designed to treat rare conditions and diseases.

The new drug was rated based on a clinical trial including 15 children with neurological symptoms present after [scorpion](#) stings. Eight of the children received Anascorp and seven received a placebo. The eight children receiving the drug showed improvement and loss of symptoms within four hours of treatment while only one of the placebo children improved. Efficacy and safety data were also collected from some 1500 patients.

Side effects caused by Anascorp include nausea, vomiting, fever, runny nose, rash, itching, headache and muscle pain.

Rare Disease Therapeutics Inc. holds the license for Anascorp and it is distributed by Accredo Health Group Inc. out of Tennessee. It is currently being manufactured by a company in Tlalpan, Mexico.

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