

Lilly psoriasis drug fares well in late-stage test

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Drugmaker Eli Lilly and Co. said its potential psoriasis treatment fared better than both a fake drug and a competitor's product during late-stage testing on patients with the most common form of the skin disease.

The Indianapolis-based company announced initial results from the research on Thursday and said it plans to submit the drug, ixekizumab, to regulators in the first half of next year. The drugmaker has been pushing to develop new treatments to replace revenue lost due to a wave of patent expirations that have hit top-selling drugs like the antidepressant Cymbalta.

In the ixekizumab research, between 31% and 41% of the patients taking its drug achieved clear skin, according to the drugmaker. Overall, those on the drug achieved better levels of skin clearance than patients taking a fake treatment or etanercept, which goes by the brand name Enbrel and is sold by Amgen Inc. and Pfizer Inc.

Psoriasis is a chronic disease that occurs when a person's immune system speeds up the growth cycle of skin cells. The most common form, plaque psoriasis, creates raised, red patches on the skin.

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