

First drug approved for rare condition that inflames blood vessels

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(HealthDay)—Nucala (mepolizumab) has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration as the first remedy to treat adults with eosinophilic granulomatosis with polyangiitis, a rare autoimmune disease that leads to inflammation of the blood vessels.

Visit the [FDA](#) to learn more.

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Other symptoms of the condition, formerly called Churg-Stress syndrome, include asthma and an overabundance of an infection-fighting white blood cell called an eosinophil. The inflamed [blood vessels](#) may affect the lungs, intestines, skin, heart and nervous system.

The condition affects a total of about 11 out of every one million people in United States, the FDA said Tuesday in a news release.

"Patients taking Nucala in clinical trials reported a significant improvement in their symptoms," said Dr. Badrul Chowdhury, director of the FDA's Division of Pulmonary, Allergy and Rheumatology Products.

Nucala, a once-monthly injection, was first approved in 2015 to treat people 12 and older with a certain type of [severe asthma](#), the FDA said. The drug's most common side effects include headache, injection-site reaction, back pain and fatigue.

People who are prone to a "hypersensitive" allergic reaction shouldn't take the drug, and those who are taking an inhaled corticosteroid medication to treat asthma should not abruptly stop the [asthma](#) remedy, the agency warned.

Nucala is produced by the British pharma firm GlaxoSmithKline, whose U.S. headquarters are in Warren, N.J.

More information: SOURCE: Dec. 12, 2017 press release, U.S. Food and Drug Administration

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