

## **CONVENIENT BIOLOGIC FOR RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS IS ON EIGHT GOVERNMENT DRUG PLANS**

### **RA patients may access a new treatment that can be self-administered once every two weeks and at home**

**MONTREAL, Québec** (October 17, 2005) -- Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) patients who are eligible for the newest form of treatment for their auto-immune disorder can now access this biologic therapy on the Ontario, Québec, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia government drug plans. Convenient to administer, HUMIRA™ is sold in an award-winning<sup>1</sup>, single-dose syringe that can be self-administered at home by most patients, including those whose hands have been affected by RA.

Health Canada recently approved HUMIRA™ (adalimumab) for reducing the signs and symptoms and inhibiting the progression of structural damage in adults with moderately to severely active rheumatoid arthritis who have had an inadequate response to one or more disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs).

HUMIRA™ requires no mixing or measuring. The syringe contains one 40-milligram dose that can be self-administered, after proper training, by subcutaneous (under the skin) injection.

Available by prescription only, HUMIRA™ is available to patients who qualify for coverage under the Ontario, Québec, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia government drug plans. RA is most prevalent in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick<sup>2</sup>. Across Canada, approximately 17,000 patients have access to HUMIRA™ through private drug benefit plans. Listings in the provinces mentioned extend the availability of HUMIRA™ to RA patients who depend on public plans for access to the new treatment in those provinces.

More than 300,000 Canadians of all ages live with RA<sup>3</sup>, a debilitating, disfiguring and often disabling autoimmune disorder that incurs significant economic cost. The cause of RA is not known and there is no cure.

Researchers have determined that people with RA tend to have an excess of a protein called tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF- $\alpha$ ); this protein triggers inflammation as part of the body's normal immune system response. Overproduction of TNF- $\alpha$  can lead to excessive inflammation such as that found in patients with RA.

By targeting, binding to and blocking the activity of TNF- $\alpha$ , HUMIRA™ helps prevent inflammation. HUMIRA™ is approved for use alone or in combination with Methotrexate or other DMARDs. Abbott Laboratories, Limited markets HUMIRA™ in Canada.

Abbott is a global, broad-based healthcare company devoted to the discovery, development, manufacture and marketing of pharmaceuticals, nutritionals, and medical products including devices and diagnostics. Abbott Canada is headquartered in Saint-Laurent, Québec, and employs approximately 1,200 people.

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1. Recipient of The Arthritis Foundation Ease-of-Use Commendation seal.
2. Health Canada. Arthritis in Canada. An ongoing challenge. Ottawa: Health Canada, 2003. Page 10. (Cat. #H39-4/14-2003E)
3. [www.arthritis.ca/types](http://www.arthritis.ca/types) of arthritis/rheumatoid.