

A new slimming pills discovered by the Vivus

There is hope that a new diet pill may soon hit the market after drug development firm Vivus announced very promising results from their late-stage trial into their slimming pill Qnexa.

They said that following two randomised Stage III trials they were confident that their medication met the benchmarks demanded by the FDA for approval and that they would be seeking permission to sell the drug next year. They plan now to find a pharmaceutical company to help market the product.

The first trial involved some 1,267 morbidly obese patients and the second 2,487 who were overweight or obese and also had other health problems, such as diabetes or high blood pressure.

Vivus said that after a year of taking the medication, the patients in the one group taking the highest dose of Qnexa lost on average 10.4% of their total body weight, while those in the other trial lost an average 11%, compared to the placebo group who lost between 1.6 to 1.8%.

Overall this means that the diet pills caused an average weight loss of 9% on average, after the placebo effect was taken into account. This more than meets the FDA's requirements for any new slimming pill, which demands that patients lose at least 5% of their body weight.

The data also showed that on one trial, 67% of patients taking the drug lost at least 5% of their body weight, compared to 17% taking the placebo. On the other trial the percentage was even higher, with 70% of patients taking the weightloss pills losing the required amount compared to 20% of those in the placebo group.

The race is now on between three companies to see who first gets their weight loss pills on the market. Orixigen Therapeutics are developing Contrave and also recently published promising late trial results. Arena Pharmaceuticals are also hoping to get their slimming pills, lorcaserin, onto the market soon.

The potential for gain for whichever company manages it first is huge. At the moment there are only two diet pills that are licensed for prescription by the FDA and European regulators, [Reductil and Xenical](#). Reductil is an appetite suppressant while Xenical limits the amount of dietary fat absorbed by the body.

If Vivus or one of their competitors manages to get another weight loss solution approved then they stand to grab a large chunk of sales, which in total are worth an estimated \$10 billion a year. A market analyst told Bloomberg earlier in October that Qnexa could generate sales of up to \$3 billion a year if the slimming pill received approval.

About the Author

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