

Novo Nordisk says to market improved insulin in 2013

December 23 2010

Danish pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk said Thursday it planned to put a new insulin product on the market by 2013 after tests showed advantages to the widely sold diabetes drug Lantus.

"We believe that this ultra long-acting fourth-generation [insulin](#) will be a serious competitor to Lantus when it reaches the market in 2013," said Mike Rulis, a spokesman for the company which is a leader in treatments for [diabetes](#).

Novo Nordisk on Thursday released results of studies it said showed that its product, Degludec, reduced the risk of dangerous drops in blood sugar levels during the night by 25 percent compared to Lantus, which is manufactured by the French company Sanofi-Aventis.

"Nocturnal hypoglycaemia -- episodes of too low blood sugar during the night -- is a major worry for many people with diabetes," Mads Krogsgaard Thomsen, Novo Nordisk's executive vice president and chief science officer, was quoted as saying in a statement.

According to the World Health Organisation, more than 220 million people worldwide have diabetes, which occurs when the body cannot produce insulin to regulate [blood sugar](#) levels or cannot use natural insulin effectively due to overweight and absence of sufficient exercise.

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Citation: Novo Nordisk says to market improved insulin in 2013 (2010, December 23) retrieved 5 March 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2010-12-novo-nordisk-insulin.html>

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