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Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic immune-mediated, neurodegenerative disorder of the central nervous system (CNS). The early stage of the disease is characterized by an inflammatory pathology in the form of focal lesions and relapses. Over time, the inflammatory phase tapers and gives way to a neurodegenerative pathology which in fact had started very early in the MS disease process. The neurodegenerative phase of MS is characterized by diffuse damage in the CNS and accumulation on disability. The socio-economic impact of MS on patients, caregivers and society is enormous; hence the need for treatment options that can address different aspects of the disease pathology.

Laquinimod is a novel, small, orally administered experimental immunomodulator currently being investigated for the treatment of MS. In animal models for MS, laquinimod inhibited both the acute and chronic aspects of the disease including reduced inflammation, demyelination and axonal damage. In clinical testing, laquinimod demonstrated a significant effect on the reduction of lesions and relapse. However, it was its more pronounced effects in reducing sustained disability progression as well as loss of brain volume that drew the most interest from the research and clinical community.

Given that neurodegeneration and accumulation of disability begin in the earliest stage of the disease and are the common features of MS pathology and in light of laquinimod's unique immunomodulating properties, future clinical development of laquinimod like the Phase III CONCERTO trial with relapsing MS patients is now conducted with more appropriate primary endpoints. Teva and Active Biotech are encouraged by the potential of laquinimod to address patients' unmet need for an oral immunomodulating MS therapy that provides efficacy offer enhanced quality of health for RRMS patients.