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## Amgen's quick Aimovig launch boosts blockbuster hopes for Lilly, Teva and Alder: analyst

by [Eric Sagonowsky](#) | Aug 20, 2018 11:43am



*An analyst predicts Amgen and Novartis' Aimovig will generate \$2.9 billion in 2025. (Amgen)*

Amgen's migraine prevention drug Aimovig, just approved in May, is riding a rising wave of early demand—and that's a good thing, not just for Amgen and its partner Novartis, but for other forthcoming drugs in the CGRP class, an analyst said Monday.

Aimovig's rollout trends "bode well for follow-on entrants" from Eli Lilly, Teva and Alder BioPharmaceuticals, Leerink Partners analyst Geoffrey Porges wrote in a note to clients. The analyst and his team upped their CGRP revenue forecasts and now predict that each of the drugs will break the blockbuster barrier by 2025—and the entire class will be worth \$6.9 billion.

The analysts predict **Aimovig** will generate \$2.87 billion in global sales, followed by Lilly's galcanezumab with \$1.59 billion, Teva's fremanezumab with \$1.24 billion and Alder's eptinezumab with \$1.19 billion. Of the \$2.87 billion figure for Aimovig, Porges predicts Amgen will capture \$2 billion while its partner Novartis nets the remaining amount.

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For its market analysis, the team used IMS prescription data and talked with headache specialists at MEDACorp, a Leerink network of thousands of healthcare professionals. In all, the team noted that Aimovig is "launching strongly," but that most patients are still on a two-month free drug program offered by Amgen. Plus, Amgen has a weeks-long processing backlog that's preventing patients from starting their treatment right away, according to the note.

On reimbursement, Porges notes that Aimovig secured a position on Express Script's national formulary, and some other large payers are reimbursing for the drug if a patient has failed at least one preventative option.

**RELATED: Amgen, Novartis 'overwhelmed' by early interest in migraine drug Aimovig: expert**

"Given the sizeable pool of patients that has tried other medicines for migraine prevention, and the dearth of new alternatives in the past couple of years, nearly all of the individuals being considered for Aimovig are immediately meeting these modest prior authorization criteria," he wrote.

All together, the CGRP migraine prevention drugs market will be worth \$4.5 billion in 2022 and \$6.9 billion in 2025, according to the Leerink team.

**RELATED: Amgen's Aimovig won its first-in-class migraine nod. Will payers step up to the \$6,900 price?**

Amgen and its partner Novartis won their first-in-class approval for Aimovig back in May. After the launch, the drugmakers set the price at \$6,900, which Express Scripts characterized as "responsible." Cost watchdog ICER, which routinely hits out at pharma pricing, endorsed Aimovig's sticker price as well.

Since the approval, analysts have detailed fast uptake for the blockbuster candidate. Aside from Porges' Monday note, an expert previously told Credit Suisse Analyst Vamil Divan that the companies have been "overwhelmed" trying to keep up with the wave of initial interest.

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