DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Food and Drug Administration
Rockville, MD 20857

NDA 17-871/S-011

Merck & Co., Inc.
Attention: Mr. Kenneth A. Kramer
Sumneytown Pike
P.O. Box 4, BLA-20
West Point, PA 19486

Dear Mr. Kramer:

Please refer to your supplemental new drug application dated August 10, 2001, submitted under section 505(b) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act for Demser (metyrosine) 250mg Capsules.

We acknowledge receipt of your submissions dated April 10 and July 1, 2002.

Your submission of July 1, 2002 constituted a complete response to our March 28, 2002 action letter.

This supplemental new drug application provides for electronic final printed labeling (FPL) revised as follows:

1. The addition of a Geriatric Use subsection to the PRECAUTIONS section of the labeling as follows:

   Geriatric Use
   Clinical studies of DEMSER did not include sufficient numbers of subjects aged 65 and over to determine whether they respond differently from younger subjects. Other reported clinical experience has not identified differences in response between the elderly and younger patients. In general, dose selection for an elderly patient should be cautious, usually starting at the low end of the dosing range, reflecting the greater frequency of decreased hepatic, renal or cardiac function, and of concomitant disease or other drug therapy.

In addition, the following change was noted:

1. The last paragraph in the DESCRIPTION section was changed from:

   DEMSER is supplied as capsules, for oral administration. Each capsule contains 250mg metyrosine. Inactive ingredients are colloidal silicon dioxide, gelatin, hydroxypropyl cellulose, magnesium stearate, and titanium dioxide. The capsules may also contain any combination of D&C Red 33, D&C Yellow 10, FD&C Blue 1, and FD&C Blue 2.

   To:

   DEMSER is supplied as capsules, for oral administration. Each capsule contains 250mg metyrosine. Inactive ingredients are colloidal silicon dioxide, gelatin, hydroxypropyl cellulose, magnesium stearate, titanium dioxide, and FD&C Blue 2.

We have completed our review of this supplemental new drug application. It is approved, effective on the date of this letter, for use as recommended in the final printed labeling submitted on July 1, 2002.

If you issue a letter communicating important information about this drug product (i.e., a "Dear Health Care Professional" letter), we request that you submit a copy of the letter to this NDA and a copy to the following address:

MEDWATCH, HF-2
FDA
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

We remind you that you must comply with the requirements for an approved NDA set forth under 21 CFR 314.80 and 314.81.

If you have any questions, please call:

Ms. Melissa Robb
Regulatory Project Manager
(301) 594-5313

Sincerely,

{See appended electronic signature page}

Douglas C. Throckmorton, M.D.
Director
Division of Cardio-Renal Drug Products
Office of Drug Evaluation I
Center for Drug Evaluation and Research

This is a representation of an electronic record that was signed electronically and this page is the manifestation of the electronic signature.

/s/

Doug Throckmorton

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