

FDA reviewing Merck's experimental insomnia drug

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(AP)—Drugmaker Merck & Co. says the Food and Drug Administration is reviewing its experimental insomnia medication, suvorexant (SOO'vor-eks-ant).

The drug minimizes the morning grogginess common with many sleep aids. It could become a big seller for the Whitehouse Station, N.J., company.

If approved, it would be the first in a new class of medicines for patients with trouble falling or staying asleep. It works by temporarily blocking chemical messengers that keep people awake.

The FDA is doing a standard review, which usually takes 10 months. If approved, suvorexant would be a controlled substance like all hypnotic sleep drugs. They require additional government reviews taking four months or longer.

In studies, suvorexant's most common side effects were tiredness and headache.

[Merck](#) also plans to seek approval for suvorexant in other countries.

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