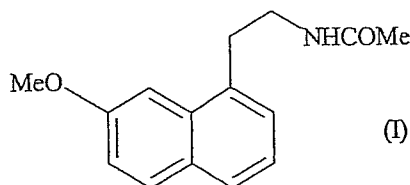


**NEW CRYSTALLINE FORM III OF AGOMELATINE,
A PROCESS FOR ITS PREPARATION
AND PHARMACEUTICAL COMPOSITIONS CONTAINING IT**

The present invention relates to a new crystalline form III of agomelatine, or *N*-[2-(7-methoxy-1-naphthyl)ethyl]acetamide, of formula (I) :



a process for its preparation and pharmaceutical compositions containing it.

- 5 Agomelatine, or *N*-[2-(7-methoxy-1-naphthyl)ethyl]acetamide, has valuable pharmacological properties.

Indeed it has the double feature of being, on the one hand, an agonist of melatoninergic system receptors and, on the other hand, an antagonist of the 5-HT_{2C} receptor. Those properties confer activity in the central nervous system and, more especially, in the
10 treatment of severe depression, seasonal affective disorders, sleep disorders, cardiovascular pathologies, pathologies of the digestive system, insomnia and fatigue resulting from jetlag, appetite disorders and obesity.

Agomelatine, its preparation and its therapeutic use have been described in European Patent Specification EP 0 447 285.

- 15 In view of the pharmaceutical value of this compound, it has been important to be able to obtain it with excellent purity, with well defined crystalline form, perfectly reproducible, which as a result exhibits valuable characteristics in terms of formulation and sufficiently stable to allow its storage for long periods without particular requirements for temperature, light, humidity or oxygen level.

- 20 Patent Specification EP 0 447 285 describes the preparation of agomelatine in eight steps, starting from 7-methoxy-1-tetralone. However, that document does not specify the

conditions for obtaining agomelatine in a form that exhibits those characteristics in a reproducible manner.

The Applicant has now developed a new synthesis process that allows agomelatine to be obtained in a well defined, perfectly reproducible crystalline form that especially exhibits
5 valuable characteristics for formulation.

More specifically, the present invention relates to the crystalline form III of the compound of formula (I), characterised by the following powder X-ray diffraction diagram, measured using a Siemens D5005 diffractometer (copper anticathode) and expressed in terms of
10 inter-planar distance d, Bragg's angle 2 theta, intensity and relative intensity (expressed as a percentage of the most intense ray) :

2-Theta (°) exp.	d (Å) exp.	Intensity (%)
10.52	8.405	100
12.92	6.848	40
16.15	5.482	53
17.38	5.097	69
17.84	4.968	96
18.55	4.779	22
19.20	4.619	97
19.89	4.460	30
20.32	4.366	24
21.15	4.197	26
22.08	4.022	16
22.96	3.870	23
23.33	3.810	95
23.84	3.730	33
24.52	3.628	25
24.88	3.576	59
25.07	3.550	90
26.27	3.390	61
26.86	3.316	22
27.97	3.187	20
29.51	3.024	43

The invention relates also to a process for the preparation of the crystalline form III of the compound of formula (I), which process is characterised in that agomelatine is heated at 110°C until the melting be completed, and is then slowly cooled until crystallisation.

5 An advantage of obtaining that crystalline form is that it allows the preparation of pharmaceutical formulations having a consistent and reproducible composition, which is especially advantageous when the formulations are to be used for oral administration.

10 A pharmacological study of the form III so obtained has demonstrated that it has substantial activity in respect of the central nervous system and in respect of microcirculation, enabling it to be established that the crystalline form III of agomelatine is useful in the treatment of stress, sleep disorders, anxiety, severe depression, seasonal affective disorders, cardiovascular pathologies, pathologies of the digestive system, insomnia and fatigue due to jetlag, schizophrenia, panic attacks, melancholia, appetite disorders, obesity, insomnia, pain, psychotic disorders, epilepsy, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, senile dementia, various disorders associated with normal or pathological ageing, 15 migraine, memory loss, Alzheimer's disease, and in cerebral circulation disorders. In another field of activity, it appears that the crystalline III form of agomelatine can be used in the treatment of sexual dysfunction, that it has ovulation-inhibiting and immunomodulating properties and that it lends itself to use in the treatment of cancers.

20 The crystalline form III of agomelatine will preferably be used in the treatment of severe depression, seasonal affective disorders, sleep disorders, cardiovascular pathologies, insomnia and fatigue due to jetlag, appetite disorders and obesity.

25 The invention relates also to pharmaceutical compositions comprising as active ingredient the crystalline form III of agomelatine together with one or more appropriate inert, non-toxic excipients. Among the pharmaceutical compositions according to the invention there may be mentioned, more especially, those which are suitable for oral, parenteral (intravenous or subcutaneous) or nasal administration, tablets or dragées, granules, sublingual tablets, gelatin capsules, lozenges, suppositories, creams, ointments, dermal gels, injectable preparations, drinkable suspensions and disintegrable pastes.

The useful dosage can be adapted according to the nature and the severity of the disorder, the administration route and the age and weight of the patient. The dosage varies from 0.1 mg to 1 g per day in one or more administrations.

The Examples below illustrate the invention but do not limit it in any way.

5 **Example 1 : Crystalline form III of *N*-[2-(7-methoxy-1-naphthyl)ethyl]acetamide**

100 g of *N*-[2-(7-methoxy-1-naphthyl)ethyl]acetamide are heated at 110°C in a ventilated incubator until the melting be completed, and are then slowly cooled until crystallisation. The crystalline form III obtained is characterised by the following powder X-ray diffraction diagram, measured using a Siemens D5005 diffractometer (copper anticathode) and expressed in terms of inter-planar distance *d*, Bragg's angle 2 theta, intensity and relative intensity (expressed as a percentage of the most intense ray) :

2-Theta (°) exp.	<i>d</i> (Å) exp.	Intensity (%)
10.52	8.405	100
12.92	6.848	40
16.15	5.482	53
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25.07	3.550	90
26.27	3.390	61
26.86	3.316	22
27.97	3.187	20
29.51	3.024	43

Example 2 : Pharmaceutical composition

Formulation for the preparation of 1000 tablets each containing a dose of 25 mg :

	Compound of Example 1	25 g
	Lactose monohydrate.....	62 g
5	Magnesium stearate	1.3 g
	Maize starch.....	26 g
	Maltodextrines	9 g
	Silica, colloidal anhydrous	0.3 g
	Sodium starch glycolate type A.....	4 g
10	Stearic acid	2.6 g

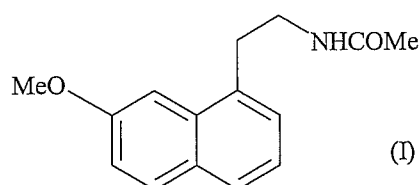
Example 3 : Pharmaceutical composition

Formulation for the preparation of 1000 tablets each containing a dose of 25 mg :

	Compound of Example 1	25 g
	Lactose monohydrate.....	62 g
15	Magnesium stearate	1.3 g
	Povidone	9 g
	Silica, colloidal anhydrous	0.3 g
	Sodium cellulose glycolate.....	30 g
	Stearic acid	2.6 g

CLAIMS

1. Crystalline form III of agomelatine of formula (I) :



- 5 characterised by the following powder X-ray diffraction diagram, measured using a diffractometer (copper anticathode) and expressed in terms of inter-planar distance d, Bragg's angle 2 theta, intensity and relative intensity (expressed as a percentage with respect to the most intense ray) :

2-Theta (°) exp.	d (Å) exp.	Intensity (%)
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25.07	3.550	90
26.27	3.390	61
26.86	3.316	22
27.97	3.187	20
29.51	3.024	43

2. Process for the preparation of the crystalline form III of the compound of formula (I) according to claim 1, characterised in that agomelatine is heated at 110°C until the melting be completed, and is then slowly cooled until crystallisation.
3. Pharmaceutical compositions comprising as active ingredient crystalline form III of agomelatine according to claim 1, in combination with one or more pharmaceutically acceptable, inert, non-toxic carriers.
4. Pharmaceutical compositions according to claim 3 for use in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of melatoninergetic disorders.
5. Pharmaceutical compositions according to claim 3 for use in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of sleep disorders, stress, anxiety, seasonal affective disorders or severe depression, cardiovascular pathologies, pathologies of the digestive system, insomnia and fatigue due to jetlag, schizophrenia, panic attacks, melancholia, appetite disorders, obesity, insomnia, psychotic disorders, epilepsy, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, senile dementia, various disorders associated with normal or pathological ageing, migraine, memory loss, Alzheimer's disease, cerebral circulation disorders, and also in sexual dysfunction, as ovulation inhibitors, immunomodulators and cancers.