

Consequently, diacerein as an anthraquinone derivative may be considered as a stimulant laxative (AHFS, 2005).

Other effects of anthraquinones (AHFS, 2005) and which have been observed with diacerein include some degree of abdominal discomfort, nausea, mild cramps and darker urine colour.

### *Tolerability*

A reasonable safety profile of diacerein can be observed, even after long-term administration. The most frequent adverse effect was mild to moderate diarrhoea. The other frequent adverse effect was clinically irrelevant darker urine coloration.

### Pharmacology

Several therapeutic targets for the treatment of osteoarthritis have been identified including inflammation, cartilage breakdown, chondrocyte apoptosis and subchondral bone remodelling. Nowadays, it is acknowledged that the key role is played by cytokine interleukin-1 $\beta$  (IL-1 $\beta$ ); a pro-inflammatory, pro-catabolic cytokine (Pelletier et al., 2003).