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NEWSLETTER



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New Tamper Resistant Oxycodone May Prevent Diversion, Abuse

Two clinical studies show that a new oxycodone formula is highly resistant to abuse. When the formulation was given in crushed form, it produced oxycodone plasma concentrations that were significantly lower than both immediate release (IR) and crushed controlled release (CR or contin) types.

Remoxy® (Pain Therapeutics, Inc.) may one day be marketed as a long and short acting oxycodone formulation that cannot be abused by crushing, freezing, heating, or dissolving in water or alcohol. The drug, currently in Phase III trials, offers a safer alternative to currently marketed oxycodone formulations. The expected benefits include less illicit use, less diversion, and fewer oxycodone related fatalities.

The studies found that the maximum plasma concentration (Cmax) values resulting from crushing the commercial CR types in water or in alcohol were significantly higher than the Cmax of the commercial IR types.

In contrast, the oxycodone Cmax for the new formulation after it was crushed and taken in water and alcohol was significantly lower than the Cmax produced by the IR formulation ($P < 0.001$).

The lower blood levels of oxycodone may represent decreased opioid related side effects, including the euphoric effect sought by abusers and the respiratory depression that has caused many abuse-related fatalities. Both studies found that mean oxycodone plasma levels after normal use in fasting versus non-fasting subjects were equivalent to the current formulations after normal use, which were reported for years not to be affected by food.

Abuse and diversion of CR oxycodone is a rapidly growing problem in the United States. In 2003, oxycodone abuse was responsible for more than 20,000 emergency room visits and hundreds of deaths, according to the Drug Abuse Warning Network, a division of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

For Information and Referrals:

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