



# Valley Pain Specialists, PC

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## New Alternative in the Treatment of Pain

If oxycodone can be prescribed without acetaminophen, then why not hydrocodone? The much anticipated wait will soon be over. Phase III clinical trial results were released this past August for a new hydrocodone formulation without acetaminophen.

**Z**ohydro<sup>®</sup> (Zogenix), also known as hydrocodone bitartrate, will be used to treat moderate to severe chronic pain. It also will be the first hydrocodone-only drug therapy ever created. With acetaminophen overuse being the number one cause of acute liver damage in the US, Zohydro<sup>®</sup> will be a welcome alternative for practitioners looking for another long acting opioid option. This medication will allow for patients to have effective hydrocodone relief without the worry of acetaminophen related side effects. This new formulation will allow a 10-, 20-, 30-, 40-, and 50- mg, option to practitioners. Zohydro<sup>®</sup> also promises to allow an easy conversion from established hydrocodone immediate release medications.

In this Phase III clinical trial, a randomized study over a 12 week time period was conducted with 300 opioid tolerant patients ranging in age from 18-75 years of age with chronic lower back pain and limited relief with current opioid therapy. Patients were trialed with hydrocodone bitartrate doses ranging from 10 mg to 50 mg daily versus placebo. Patients reported significant relief of pain with hydrocodone bitartrate over placebo. Based on the Numerical Rating Scale, there was a change in the average 24- hour pain intensity scores for patients on Zohydro<sup>®</sup>. Pending FDA approval, Zohydro<sup>®</sup> will offer a promising option when treating chronic pain patients.

While Zohydro<sup>®</sup> carries many benefits due to its lack of acetaminophen, it still carries the same potential side effects and risks as most other opioids. Similar to Vicodin<sup>®</sup> or Norco<sup>®</sup>, Zohydro<sup>®</sup> may result in constipation or nausea among other adverse effects. When prescribing Zohydro<sup>®</sup>, physicians should not forget the risk of patients developing tolerance and the possibility of abuse and addiction to this medication.

Adapted from:  
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*For Information and Referrals:*

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