

# Pain Relief Connection

## The Pain Information Newsletter

Provided by MGH Cares About Pain Relief



Archived issues are available at <http://www.MassGeneral.org/PainRelief>

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DOUBLE ISSUE

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### In the News

- The [Food and Drug Administration](#) has approved generic forms of sustained release oxycodone (brand name OxyContin). The [80 mg](#) strength is now available in some areas, marketed by [Teva Pharmaceuticals](#). [Endo Pharmaceuticals](#) has also received approval, but is in patent infringement litigation with [Purdue](#), which manufactures [OxyContin](#), and will delay marketing until the case is resolved. Early problems for the generic version include multiple reports of patients going into withdrawal or experiencing increased pain or side effects after switching to the generic form; this information has not been systematically collected or analyzed. There have also been reports that the generic form had already been diverted to illegal dealers before some pharmacies have received their first shipments.
- “Health literacy” has received a lot of attention in recent months, at MGH and elsewhere. The [Institute of Medicine](#) has a [Health Literacy Project](#) and has just released a major report, [Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion](#). Last year there was a presentation the topic at MGH, and the Treadwell Library has sponsored a series of day-long courses on “plain language” education materials. The Patient Education Committee also sponsored a Nursing Grand Rounds presentation. An obvious problem with low levels of health literacy is a communications disconnect between clinicians and patients. The formatting of web pages and print publications for clinicians has also been shown to effect the quality of professional communication. Later this year we hope to re-format *Pain Relief Connection* to better comply with plain language principles.

### Journal Watch

- Viscusi ER, et al. [Patient-Controlled Transdermal Fentanyl Hydrochloride vs Intravenous Morphine Pump for Postoperative Pain](#). *JAMA* March 17, 2004;291(11):1333-1341
- Miaskowski C, et al. [Randomized clinical trial of the effectiveness of a self-care intervention to improve cancer pain management](#). *Journal of Clinical Oncology* May 1 2004;22(9):1713-20.

### Department of Error

- If at first you don’t succeed . . . In attempting to correct an error in the February 2004 issue, we got it wrong again. The name of the author of “[Safe Use of Over-the-Counter Pain Relievers](#)” was misspelled. The author is Harold J. DeMonaco. We regret the error—again.
- *Preventing Medication Errors* is a monthly e-mail newsletter from [Treadwell Library](#). It is available by subscription by contacting [Julia Whelan](#). The [current issue](#) is available on the Treadwell web site.
- The [lead article](#) in this month’s *Nurse Advise-ERR*, the free web-based newsletter from the [Institute for Safe Medication Practices](#), focuses on hidden sources of acetaminophen. Combination analgesics such as Percocet (oxycodone + acetaminophen) and Vicodin (hydrocodone + acetaminophen) and their generic equivalents contain varying amounts of acetaminophen (range: 325 mg – 750 mg/tablet, depending on the product). Acetaminophen is also contained in many non-prescription analgesics and cold medications. The adult daily limit for acetaminophen is 4 grams. Practices to avoid accidental acetaminophen overdose are suggested.

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## Pain Resources on the MGH Intranet

The [Patient Care Services](#) web site has recently added an intranet (accessible only via MGH computers) Clinical Resources section. The [Pain Resources](#) page, added to the site last September, has been moved to this section. From the PCS home page, point to 'Clinical Resources' (don't click, just point), then click on 'Pain Resources.'

## Annual MGH Pain Pulse Survey

Pain Pulse, held March 24, is an annual survey of MGH patients that is intended to raise awareness among the MGH community of the prevalence of pain across all patient populations, settings, and services. There were a record number of patients participating this year (1369) from a record number of locations (70). For the first time, there were more ambulatory patients than inpatients participating (838 outpatients vs 531 inpatients), and sites off the main campus were included. As in previous years, more than half the participants reported having experienced pain in the past 24 hours. An article on Pain Pulse 2004 will appear in the June *Caring Headlines*.

## Pain Relief Champions Course

45 new Pain Relief Champions from 24 units attended at least one day of the 2-day Pain Relief Champions course; about half attended both days. The course is intended for a multidisciplinary audience and is presented by a multidisciplinary faculty. A major objective of the course is to motivate participants to return to their work sites as change agents. They are encouraged to identify do-able projects that will incrementally improve the care of patients with pain. They are also encouraged to engage unit leaders and colleagues in the project as a means of increasing awareness about the issue and improving success rates. We expect the next Pain Relief Champions course (PRC VI) to be offered in April or May of 2005.

## Pain Education on the Web

There are many opportunities for professional continuing education on the web. One we've just learned about is [freeCME.com](#). Remember that even approved/accredited continuing education programs may be supported by industry grants, especially if they are free.

## Pain Resources on the Web

- The [Center for Integrative Medicine](#) at the University of Maryland School of Medicine has developed, and regularly updates, two bibliographic [databases](#): The Arthritis and Complementary Medicine Database (ARCAM) and the Complementary and Alternative Medicine and Pain Database (CAMPAIN).
- [Bandolier](#) is a monthly independent print and online journal about evidence-based healthcare, written by Oxford scientists. According to its web site, it "has become the premier source of evidence-based healthcare information in the UK and worldwide for both healthcare professionals and consumers." Bandolier includes the [Oxford Pain Internet Site](#). The latest pain review is "[NSAIDs, coxibs, smoking, and bone](#)" which reviews the controversial question of whether NSAIDs interfere with bone healing in surgery or trauma. Conclusion: the evidence for interference is very weak and confounded by other factors, especially smoking. Research in both animals and humans has produced contradictory results. NSAIDs as a class appear not to be culpable, though ketorolac (Toradol) and perhaps indomethacin (Indocin) show a trend toward interference in healing.
- The [International Association for the Study of Pain](#) produces a free newsletter, [Pain: Clinical Updates](#). The [current issue](#) looks at the interface of neuropathic pain and the immune system.
- The Cancer Pain Education Resource ([CaPER](#)) was developed at Tufts University Medical School as part of a multidisciplinary professional education program. The while the site is confusing to navigate and some links are obsolete, it has some useful educational tools. A helpful feature is a list of [criteria](#) for evaluating web sites. (See also Master of Science in Pain Research, Education, and Policy, below)

## Pain-Related Education Opportunities

- June 2 (Wed), 4:00pm – 8:00pm: **Open House for the [Master of Science in Pain Research, Education, and Policy](#)**, Tufts University Medical School. An interdisciplinary postgraduate program. 150 Harrison Ave, Boston. For info and to RSVP, call 617-636-8541 or e-mail [jconnolly@tufts-NEMC.org](mailto:jconnolly@tufts-NEMC.org).

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- June 23 – 27 (Wed – Sun): [Principles and Practice of Pain Medicine](#). Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel, Boston. Harvard Medical School, Department of Continuing Education & Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Department of Anesthesia.
- June 9 – 11 (Weds – Fri). [The Art and Science of Palliative Care Nursing](#). Newton Marriott. *Day 3 is a half-day conference devoted to pediatric palliative care.* Registration deadline is May 26. For additional information: Connie Dahlin: [cdahlin@partners.org](mailto:cdahlin@partners.org); Maureen Lynch: [mtlynch@partners.org](mailto:mtlynch@partners.org); Palliative Care Program: [palicare@partners.org](mailto:palicare@partners.org).
- June 9 – 10 (Wed – Thurs). **Brigham & Women’s Hospital 4th annual pain management conference.** At the Charles Hotel in Cambridge. The keynote speaker will be Chris Pasero, RN, co-author (with Margo McCaffery, RN, MSN) of [Pain: Clinical Manual 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.](#) CEU for pharmacy & nursing are available. For registration information, call 617-732-6480.

## MGH Pain Calendar

- June 14 (Mon) 11:00pm – 12:00pm **Conversations About Cancer Pain** (for patients and families), featuring Annabel Edwards, ANP. Cancer Resource Room, Cox 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Sponsored by HOPES Program.

*Chronic Pain Rounds are held Mondays at 12:00N in the Clinics 3 amphitheatre.*

*Cancer Pain Rounds are held Wednesdays at 12:00N in the Cox 8 Conference Room.*

URL notes: **Hold your cursor over the link for a second to see the URL.** If you are reading this in hard copy, this month’s links are:

Previous issues of *Pain Relief Connection*: <http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Newsletter>

CCPD educational offerings: [http://pcs.mgh.harvard.edu/CCPD/Educational\\_Offerings/cpd\\_offerings\\_calendar.asp](http://pcs.mgh.harvard.edu/CCPD/Educational_Offerings/cpd_offerings_calendar.asp)

Patient Care Services Pain Resource Center: [http://pcs.mgh.harvard.edu/Secure/Clinical\\_Resources/Pain\\_Resources.asp](http://pcs.mgh.harvard.edu/Secure/Clinical_Resources/Pain_Resources.asp)

FDA approval of generic sustained release oxycodone: <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/news/2004/NEW01039.html>

Teva 80 Mg sustained release oxycodone: <http://www.tevausea.com/default.aspx?pageid=58&ndc=0093-0033-01&ndcsub=0033>

Teva Pharmaceuticals: <http://www.tevausea.com/>

Endo Pharmaceuticals: <http://www.endo.com/>

Purdue: <http://www.pharma.com/>

Institute of Medicine: <http://www.iom.edu/>

IOM Health Literacy Project: <http://www.iom.edu/project.asp?id=3827>

IOM Health Literacy Report: <http://www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=19723>

Article: Pt controlled transdermal fentanyl: <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/291/11/1333>

JAMA web site: <http://jama.ama-assn.org/contents-by-date.0.dtl>

Article: Cancer pain patient self care: <http://www.jco.org/cgi/content/full/22/9/1713?cookietest=yes>

JCO web site: <http://www.jco.org/contents-by-date.0.shtml>

Safe use of pain relievers:

[http://www.intelihealth.com/IH/ihtIH?d=dmthMSContent&c=375891&p=~br.IHW%7C~st.29721%7C~r.WSIHW000%7C~b.\\*%7C](http://www.intelihealth.com/IH/ihtIH?d=dmthMSContent&c=375891&p=~br.IHW%7C~st.29721%7C~r.WSIHW000%7C~b.*%7C)

Treadwell Library: <http://massgeneral.org/library/default.asp?>

Julia Whelan e-mail: [jcwhelan@partners.org](mailto:jcwhelan@partners.org)

*Preventing Medication Errors*: <http://massgeneral.org/library/PME.pdf>

Article: Too much acetaminophen? <http://www.ismp.org/NursingArticles/Issues/NurseAdviseERR200405.pdf>

*Nurse Advise-ERR*: <http://www.ismp.org/NursingArticles/index.htm>

Institute for Safe Medication Practices: <http://www.ismp.org/>

MGH Patient Care Services: <http://pcs.mgh.harvard.edu/>

Center for Integrative Medicine: <http://www.compmed.umm.edu/>

CAM databases: <http://www.compmed.umm.edu/Databases.html>

Bandolier: <http://www.jr2.ox.ac.uk/bandolier/>

Oxford Pain Internet Site: <http://www.jr2.ox.ac.uk/bandolier/booth/painpag/index2.html>

Article: NSAIDs, Coxibs, Smoking and Bone: <http://www.jr2.ox.ac.uk/bandolier/booth/painpag/wisdom/NSB.pdf>

International Association for the Study of Pain: <http://www.iasp-pain.org/>

*Pain: Clinical Updates*: <http://www.iasp-pain.org/PCUOpen.html>

Article: Neuropathic pain and immune system: <http://www.iasp-pain.org/PCU04-1.pdf>

Cancer Pain Education Resource: <http://www.caper.tufts.edu/>

Criteria for web site evaluation: <http://tusk.tufts.edu/hsdb4/content/M1197C/31654>

M.S. in Pain Research, Education, and Policy: <http://www.tufts.edu/med/prep/>

Princ. & Practice of Pain Med: <http://cme.med.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/hmscme.cgi?SECTION=CLASSES&ID=00242424&SO=N>

Art and Science of Palliative Nursing: [http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Palliative\\_Care\\_NursingBroc.pdf](http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Palliative_Care_NursingBroc.pdf)

*Pain: Clinical Manual*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.: <http://www3.us.elsevierhealth.com/PAIN/>

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