

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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In the News

- In the wake of the withdrawal of Vioxx, new warnings on Celebrex, Bextra, and naproxen, and many news reports and editorials on these agents over the past 4 months, the FDA Arthritis Drug Advisory Committee held public hearings on COX-2 inhibitors and other NSAIDs in mid-February. [News reports](#) from the meeting indicate that there were sharp disagreements among members regarding the individual agents, but the Committee ultimately supported the continued availability of the currently approved COX-2 inhibitors (Vioxx, Celebrex, and Bextra). The FDA is not required to accept the recommendations of its advisory committees, and it is not yet known what restrictions will be placed on the marketing or prescribing of the drugs if the recommendations are accepted. The ultimate issue is whether the risks of cardiovascular events outweigh the analgesic benefits of these agents. A [review](#) of the hearings in the *BMJ* (open access) is more balanced than some of the headlines.
- In a related development, the FDA has [announced](#) the creation of a Drug Safety Oversight Board.
- A [generic](#) form of the transdermal fentanyl patch (25, 50, 75 & 100 mcg/hr) has been [approved](#) by the FDA.
- The FDA has [approved](#) a new 12 mcg/hr Duragesic transdermal fentanyl patch. It is not yet available.
- Two new medications have been approved for pain:
 - [Prialt](#) (ziconotide) is a “first in class” medication derived from the venom of a sea snail. It is approved only for intrathecal infusion for patients with refractory pain or intolerant to other aggressive treatments.
 - [Lyrica](#) (pregabalin) is an anticonvulsant also approved for post-herpetic neuralgia and diabetic peripheral neuropathy. Lyrica is not yet available.
- A New York Times [article](#) explores the search for new classes of pain-killing drugs (free registration required).
- Gabitril (tiagabine) is an anticonvulsant that is occasionally used off-label for neuropathic pain. The FDA has released a [warning](#) that use in patients without seizure disorders can paradoxically result in seizures.

Patient Resources

- [Phantom limb pain](#) (from [American Pain Foundation](#), *APF Pain Monitor*).
- The [Pain Multimedia Library](#) is a service of Beth Israel Medical Center’s [StopPain.org](#) web site. Written and audio/video materials in English, Spanish, and Russian currently cover: Complex Regional Pain Syndrome, Low Back Pain, Migraine Headache, Shingles/Post-Herpetic Neuralgia (PHN), and Sickle Cell Pain.

Department of Error

The February issue of [ISMP Nurse Advise-ERR](#) features Part II of its 2-part series on Safety Issues with Patient-Controlled Analgesia (PCA).

Journal Watch

 (journal titles followed by [M] have full text free access on MGH computers)

- A [collection](#) of articles on the cardiovascular effects of COX-2s in *New England Journal of Medicine* [M] was released to coincide with the FDA meeting.
- Dubinsky, RM, et al. Treatment of postherpetic neuralgia: An evidence-based report of the Quality Standards Subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology. *Neurology*. [M] 28 Sep. 2004;63(6):959-965.
- Diatchenko L, et al. Genetic basis for individual variations in pain perception and the development of a chronic pain condition. *Human Molecular Genetics*. Jan 2005;14(1):135-143. (A [Report](#) on the study in *Science News*).

MGH Cares About Pain Relief

Massachusetts General Hospital • Founders 606 • 55 Fruit Street • Boston, MA 02114
617-726-0746 (Phone) • 617-724-8693 (Fax) • PainRelief@Partners.org • <http://www.MassGeneral.org/PainRelief>

To be added to or removed from the *Pain Relief Connection* mailing list, send an email to PainRelief@Partners.org

Pain-Related Education Opportunities

- Mar 30 – Apr 2 (Weds – Sun) **American Pain Society Annual Meeting**. Boston, MA. <http://www.ampainsoc.org>
- Mar 31 (Thu) 10:15am – 1:30pm. The Boston Pain Forum Second Annual Meeting **“Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging, Pain and Forensic Issues”** free with registration of 1-4 days at APS Annual Meeting; Hynes Convention Center.
- May 18 (Weds) 8:00am – 12:00N. Massachusetts Pain Initiative quarterly meeting. Featured speaker: Richard Payne, MD, **Addressing Disparities in Pain Management**. Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel, Marlborough, MA. More info: Amy.Goldstein@cancer.org or 580-270-4653.
- The [EPEC](#) (Education in Palliative and End-of-Life care) curriculum has been revised and is available online. There are 3 pain-related modules available for \$30 each and awarding 1 CME for each.
- **Master of Science in Pain Research, Education, and Policy**, Tufts University Medical School. An interdisciplinary postgraduate program. For info call 617-636-8541 or e-mail jconnolly@tufts-NEMC.org. (<http://www.tufts.edu/med/prep/>)
- **Coordinating Care at the End of Life: The Role of Hospice**. The [American Hospice Foundation](#) announces a new electronic (CD-ROM) CE course with contact hours for nurses, social workers and case managers. Contact Marsha Nelson, at 202-223-0204, Ext. 206 or mnelson@americanhospice.org. (<http://www.americanhospice.org/news/SelfStudy.htm>)

MGH Pain Calendar

- Mar 9 – 10 (Wed-Thu) 8:00 – 4:30. **End of Life Nursing Education Program**. Rm 210 Charles River Plaza. Contact [CCPD](#).
- Mar 10 (Thu) 11:00am – 12:00N **Coping with Cancer Pain** (for patients and families), featuring Annabel Edwards, ANP, Cancer Pain Team Nurse Practitioner. Cancer Resource Room, Cox 1st floor. Sponsored by HOPES Program.
- Mar 15 (Tue) 8:00am – 8:00pm **Pain Knowledge and Skills Day**. Spend 1-1.5 hours sharpening your pain skills at stations teaching the PCA pump, converting opioids, MGH pain guidelines, and much more! Pre-registration not required. Walcott Conference Room, Wang 1. Contact Tom Quinn at 617-726-0746, or tquinn1@partners.org.
- April 21-22 (Thu – Fri) 7:30am – 4:30pm **Annual Pain Relief Champions Course**. Multidisciplinary. Walcott Conference Room, Wang 1. [Application](#) deadline Apr 15. Contact Tom Quinn at 617-726-0746, or tquinn1@partners.org.
- **Chronic Pain Rounds are held Mondays at 12:00N in the Clinics 3 amphitheatre. Of note:**
 - Mar 28. **Safety Issues in Pain Management**, Rex Woodleigh
- **Cancer Pain Rounds are held Wednesdays at 12:00N in the Cox 8 Conference Room.**
- **Palliative Care Grand Rounds are held Wednesdays at 8:00am in the Ether Dome**

MGH Pain Resources:

PainRelief web site: <http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/>

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

Previous Pain Topics articles: http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Pain%20Topics/mghpain_paintopics_index.htm

Patient Care Services Pain Resource Center: http://pcs.mgh.harvard.edu/Secure/Clinical_Resources/Pain_Resources.asp

CCPD educational offerings: http://pcs.mgh.harvard.edu/CCPD/Educational_Offerings/cpd_offerings_calendar.asp

Treadwell Library (Magic): <http://magic.mgh.harvard.edu/>

MGH Formulary (includes patient teaching handouts in 16 languages): <http://www.crlonline.com/crlsql/servlet/crlonline>

Partners Handbook: <http://is.partners.org/handbook/>

Primary Care Office InSite (PCOI) (Clinician and patient information): http://oi.mgh.harvard.edu/pcoi/frontpage_frames.asp

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:

Report on FDA Drug Advisory Committee: <http://www.cnn.com/2005/HEALTH/conditions/02/18/arthritis.drugs.ap/index.html>

Review in *BMJ* of FDA hearing: <http://bmj.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/full/330/7489/440>

FDA Drug Safety Oversight Board: <http://www.fda.gov/oc/factsheets/drugsafety.html>

Generic transdermal fentanyl patch: <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/ANSWERS/2005/ANS01339.html>

New Duragesic size: <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/499214>

Prialt web page: <http://www.prialt.com/>

Lyrica web page: <https://www.lyrica.com/cwpb/v1/begin.do?null>

Search for pain-killers: <http://tinyurl.com/3j2vs>

Gabitril warning: <http://www.fda.gov/cder/drug/advisory/gabitril.htm>

Phantom limb pain article: <http://www.painfoundation.org/eNews2005/0205/fishmanphantom.htm>

Pain Multimedia Library: <http://www.stoppain.org/multimedia/index.html>

ISMP Nurse Advise-ERR: <http://www.ismp.org/NursingArticles/list.htm>

NEJM Cox-2 articles: http://content.nejm.org/early_release/2-15

Genetics of differences in pain perception: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2005/01/050111172723.htm>

Pain Relief Champions (PRC VI) course: http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Pn_Rlf_Champ_course/Pn_Relf_Champ.htm

PRC VI Application: http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Pn_Rlf_Champ_course/PRC_VI_Application.doc

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