



## High Potency Opioid Patient Safety Program

The high potency opioid agents listed in the table below contain strong opioid narcotics, which can cause severe respiratory depression (difficulty breathing) in patients who are not already taking sufficient doses of strong narcotic pain medications (opioid tolerant). High potency opioid agents listed in the table are indicated for:

- management of persistent, moderate to severe chronic pain requiring continuous, around-the-clock administration for an extended period of time, that cannot be managed by other means
- ONLY in patients who are already receiving high potency opioids, who have demonstrated opioid tolerance

High potency opioid agents listed in the table should NOT be used for:

- management of acute pain or short periods of opioid analgesia in non-opioid tolerant patients
- post-op pain, including outpatient/day surgeries
- mild or intermittent pain

Warnings concerning safe use of listed high potency opioid agents\* have been issued by various organizations, including the FDA, the Institute of Safe Medication Practices, and the DoD Patient Safety Center.

The following safety measures for the use of listed high potency opioid agents\* were established by the DoD Pharmacy & Therapeutics (P&T) Committee and approved by the Director, TMA.

- Automatic safety profile review: When a beneficiary presents a prescription at a TRICARE retail network pharmacy or the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy (MOP), the beneficiary's medication profile will be automatically reviewed to verify opioid tolerance. This is accomplished using a systematic review by the Pharmacy Data Transaction Service (PDTs) for at least one prescription for one of the following strong opioids from a TRICARE retail network pharmacy, MOP, or a Military Treatment Facility (MTF) during the last 60 days: fentanyl patch, morphine, oxycodone (not including combination products), hydromorphone, methadone, or oxymorphone.
- Pharmacist or physician verification: If opioid tolerance is not verified by the PDTs systematic review, the pharmacist or physician will be asked to verify previous medication use for safety reasons. Retail pharmacists have the ability to override system warnings at the point-of-sale after determining that an individual beneficiary is opioid-tolerant based on information obtained from the physician or patient. Physicians will be contacted by the TRICARE mail order pharmacy directly or have the ability to contact Express Scripts, Inc to provide this information.

No prior authorization form is required for most patients to obtain listed high potency opioid agents.

**\*High Potency Opioid Agents Subject to Patient Safety Program**

The following agents are subject to prior authorization requirements of the Patient Safety Program:

- Abstral (fentanyl sublingual) all strengths
- Actiq (fentanyl buccal) all strengths
- Avinza (morphine sulfate extended release)  $\geq$  45 mg
- Duragesic (fentanyl patch, generics)  $\geq$  25 mcg/hr
- Embeda (morphine sulfate/naltrexone extended release)  $\geq$  100/4 mg
- Fentora (fentanyl buccal) all strengths
- Kadian (morphine sulfate extended release)  $\geq$  100 mg
- MS Contin (morphine sulfate extended release)  $\geq$  100 mg
- Exalgo (hydromorphone extended release)  $\geq$  8 mg
- Onsolis (fentanyl sublingual) all strengths
- Oxycontin (oxycodone, generics)  $\geq$  60 mg

Process and requirements approved through the Uniform Formulary decision-making process (November 2006, February 2007, November 2011)

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