

## **Why do we need abuse-deterrent formulations of pain medications?**

*An estimated 100 million people suffer from chronic pain in the United States.<sup>1</sup> While there is a large pain problem, there is also a substantial issue with prescription drug abuse, particularly involving opioids. Prescription drug abuse is the leading cause of accidental death in the United States. It is estimated that 78 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose and an estimated 4.3 million Americans abuse opioids each year.<sup>2</sup> What can be done to maintain access to pain medications for chronic pain patients while reducing the potential for prescription drug abuse? One strategy is adoption of abuse-deterrent formulations of pain medications.*

### **What are abuse-deterrent formulations?**

Medications can be abused in a number of ways, from taking too many pills to crushing and injecting them. Abuse-deterrent formulations (ADFs) are developed to deter many forms of abuse. ADFs of opioids include products with one or more type of abuse-deterrent technology, including physical barriers to make them difficult to chew or crush, releasing agents that cause unpleasant side effects when abused, and prohibiting the drug release in the body until it is transformed in the gastrointestinal tract.

### **Why do people with legitimate chronic pain have issues accessing their prescription medications?**

Due to the prescription drug abuse epidemic, policies have been enacted resulting in the reduction of access to prescription drugs for some patients. Access issues for patients manifest in various ways including physicians no longer prescribing pain medications and pharmacies not carrying sufficient supplies.

### **If I don't abuse medications, why should I support the development of ADFs?**

According to a recent survey, nearly 70 percent of abused opioids originate from a friend or family.<sup>3</sup> If opioids end up in the wrong hands, most of them can be easily abused. Due to the increasing issue with prescription drug abuse, legitimate chronic pain patients are experiencing issues accessing their medications. The development of ADFs will help to deter prescription drug abuse and improve legitimate chronic pain patients' access to medications. Currently there are several ADFs on the market and dozens of others in development, giving patients and physicians more options.

### **Will ADFs be more expensive and why should I pay for them?**

While the technology required to make ADFs may result in the products costing more than non-ADFs, many pharmaceutical companies support patient programs and ensure access for patients by reducing co-pays. Therefore, the cost to the patient should not be substantially more, and it is important that we all do our part to reduce prescription drug abuse.

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*Developed in collaboration with Egalet Corp.*

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<sup>1</sup> "AAPM Facts and Figures on Pain." American Academy of Pain Medicine, [http://www.painmed.org/patientcenter/facts\\_on\\_pain.aspx](http://www.painmed.org/patientcenter/facts_on_pain.aspx). Accessed September 7, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> "Injury Prevention & Control: Opioid Overdose." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/epidemic/>. Accessed September 7, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Results from the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health