

Ms. Kimberly Topper
Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (HFD-21)
Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

June 2, 2001

Dear Ms. Topper,

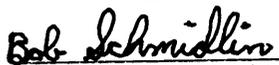
First I would like you to know that I am an honored member of the "Silent Majority" because my wife of some 42 years, Georgiann, and I seldom if ever respond to anything which we read or see that we disagree with. However, we have recently read and have seen on TV commentaries on modern drug therapy which at best were truly misguided and ill informed. The following medical information is crucial as to why our above disagreement dictates my writing this letter to you.

Unfortunately, I am disabled due to degenerative disc disease of the lumbar spine with additional pain in the upper dorsal area. This finding has been confirmed via several MRI's. I suffer from low back pain radiating into both legs and upper dorsal pain radiating down my left arm and hand. Physical exams performed by a Neurologist, a Rheumatologist, as well as two medical internists confirm chronic pain, tenderness, muscle spasms and restriction of motion in the lumbar and upper dorsal areas. Blood tests also confirm that I am a diabetic who has also been diagnosed by a medical Cardiologist with having congestive cardiomyopathy substantiated by MUGA Scans taken at Broward General Medical Center located in the heart of Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

I sincerely feel that I have been blessed with being attended to by the most knowledgeable of all medical doctors. My condition is deteriorating to the point where it necessitates me now having to use a cane, a wheelchair, plus I still have to depend on my wife to help me carry out a few personal hygiene tasks. However, I am now able to live, what I feel is at least a quasi normal lifestyle around my home, thanks to the proper use of MS Contin. Following my medical specialists (a Rheumatologist) exact orders, I have been successfully taking MS Contin, which does not give me either a physical high nor low, but does take the edge off of what was the severest of all pain. MS Contin does NOT adversely affect either my diabetes, my congestive cardiomyopathy, nor does it conflict with any of my other prescribed medications. I would also add that previous to taking MS Contin, I did take Oxycontin with the same amount of success and it was only because of striving toward better pain management that my Rheumatologist prescribed MS Contin instead of Oxycontin. The only adverse side effect which I have found with both Oxycontin and MS Contin have in common is what I sincerely feel is their highly absorbent price tags, even at the so called discount pharmacies.

Please Ms. Topper, do NOT let what I honestly feel is the MISGUIDED information printed in the newspaper and/or reported over the airwaves, adversely affect your thought processes nor action which might be taken by the FDA. I hope and trust that you and your colleagues take into account the physical well being of those of us who depend on either Oxycontin or MS Contin for the relief of chronic pain and do NOT tie the hands of those physicians who, by their oath, help us citizens who are under their meticulous care. Please listen to the patients who successfully take either of these medications to help relieve chronic pain and NOT any of the reporters who have not taken them and may be going on pure "hear say." I thank YOU, Kimberly, for your time and attention to this matter.

Cordially,



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