

**THE CLEVELAND CLINIC
FOUNDATION****WESTLAKE**

June 7, 2001

**Anesthetic and Life Support Drugs Advisory Committee
Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20856**

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**ATTN: KIMBERLY TOPPER
Center for Drug Evaluation and Research
HFD-21**

Dear Ms. Topper:

Thank you for the opportunity to present written testimony to the committee in regards to the use of opioid analgesics for the treatment of chronic non cancer pain. I am a Board Certified Orthopaedic Surgeon who has exclusively practiced spine surgery for the last fifteen years. In my day to day practice, I see multiple patients who have chronic non malignant pain and who have debilitating spinal conditions that require either additional surgery or some form of spinal stabilization.

As you can well imagine, I have patients present with a wide variety of pain medications including opioids and have found patients on multiple opioid medications in efforts to control their pain. I have used the medication Oxycontin since it became available and feel strongly that the use of this medication provides me a wide variety of treatment options and flexibility of dosing in the aggressive management of chronic pain. This also helps me eliminate multi-pharmacology in this trying patient population. The abilities to try to reach a stable plateau of pain control but still allow the patient some control with the use of a rescue dose in the form of immediate release Oxycontin has worked well. I understand the concern of opioids that can be misused, however, in my opinion this has no different place than any other narcotic medication used in an effort to control chronic and non-malignant pain. I strongly urge this panel to continue to allow these types of medications to be used in situations such as I have described and to encourage the pharmaceutical industry to continue looking for drug delivery system that allows us to control this debilitating disease and to allow us to better treat our patients.

Respectfully submitted by Robert S. Biscup, D.O.
Cleveland Clinic Foundation
Director of Regional Spine Development

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