

OXYCONTIN FDA MEETING

TO: Kimberly Toppera

To whom it may concern:

Regarding the treatment of Opioids, from a chronic pain sufferer~

Here I sit, a mother of three writing this letter to those whom are making decisions about the use of Opioids in the treatment of chronic pain. Unless a person knows what it feels like to be "young," "old" and in chronic daily pain, they could never know how horrible it can be. It robs so much from life, takes away from all the usual pleasures one might otherwise be experiencing.

I can remember the pain, when it all started, as a young woman. My first menses, which I will never forget (or each one that followed), I at age 12 was in such agony I really imagined for the first time that G-D was punishing me for some reason. I could do nothing, during each period; I missed at least 2 full days of school. The pain only got worse as I got older. At such a young age I had had two surgeries, colonoscopies and so on. One week at age 22 in a hospital, with no pain relief and no relief from the constant stomach problems that made me feel like death. I would lie on the bathroom floor, praying, and begging for relief. I was FINALLY diagnosed with Endometriosis; I had some on my bowels, on other organs, and scar tissue that can wrap your insides together. Just hearing that I was not losing my mind, and I really did have a true pain condition, that eased my mind. The pain however began to be a constant knife in my lower left side. That was just the beginning, my symptoms got a lot worse, and then a horrible car accident.

The car accident, that really changed my life, I was injured very badly, my neck, and my jaw. I have so many problems now, I just could not possible throw them all down on paper, to boring and to depressing. It is not as if I have just "ONE" pain problem, I have several and YES my pain is severe.

How many times I had to call my husband home from work due to the migraines, the ones that left me on the floor throwing up, unable to attend to the needs of my children. The migraines, the pain, the time spent laying in a hospital bed thinking that the pain would eventually kill me, while nurses and MD's were poking, prodding and flashing lights in my eyes.

Does anyone think this is glamorous? Do people know how embarrassing pain can be? I doubt it, or this controversy would not be going on at the moment. Somehow along the lines, people have forgotten to educate us in this country as what chronic pain is, as to what addiction is and what exactly being dependent on certain medications are. Why is it that addicts are not treated with more respect, the last time I looked addiction was a "DISEASE."

Nobody but those of us whom suffer on a daily basis, KNOW just how horrible it can become. Those of us whom have access to the Internet, have formed groups where we can talk about these problems, discuss what is out there and how to find a good, knowledgeable DR.

My life, I have a piece of it back again! Finding a professional who will listen for an hour, talk, exam and make absolutely sure that my life is lived to the fullest, has been the very best thing that has happened in years.

I no longer need to go to the Emergency Room for my migraines, thanks to an antidepressant, and thanks for the wonderful migraine medication I am able to take. My back, my neck my jaw, well they are all problems that still bother me daily but my pain levels have decreased. I am able to play with my children, not be in a rotten mood all day, I am able to take something when I feel the tears about to roll down my face. Thank goodness for the pain medications out there, if I were unable to achieve this level of pain relief, I wonder where I might be today? Lying in bed, with pain at a level that you just KNOW you will never get any sleep, I never want to go back to that point of life. It would have destroyed my marriage, my children, and my whole life. One man, a DR, has totally changed my life around.

All the media, all the stories out there about a medication called Oxycontin, absolutely make my stomach turn. This is turning our pain movement backwards, all of this negative sensationalism. Nobody in Hollywood is allowed to suffer from pain? Nobody in the government? What about all our elderly who cannot even fight this battle for themselves once they are placed into a nursing home? I recently was able to help my own grandma, who is at the end of life, by hiring a wonderful DR that will treat her pain (even though she cannot even open her eyes, or mouth to express that she has it). Now my grandmother has a Duragesic Patch on her arm, and she is doing so much better. Would we run around and call her an addict?

It seems that if someone is taking anything for pain, whether it be a Vicodin, or Percocet, or anything that contains pain-relieving agents, well then they are called "ADDICT." It makes me so angry, especially when I have read all the studies on the low addiction rates. Does anyone who is pursuing this "OXYCONTIN" frenzy have any idea? I never read anything but the poor families who had a child (an adult child) who was stupid enough to snort a tablet meant for pain control, of course for a HIGH. Where are the stories that talk about the "PAIN," the hell some of us live in every single day?

Obviously there are people out there who suffer from emotional pain, and they also must be treated in the same compassionate manner as those of us whom suffer physical pains. The people who have emotional pain, they will obviously do anything to hide from it. Snorting pills, injection of illicit drugs, snorting cocaine, and drinking large amounts of something LEGAL but that is just as deadly "ALCOHOL." I hear that teens are buying "ANIMAL ANESTHESIA" over the

Internet and using that to get high. I have heard that teens snort cardiac medications. This SHOULD not be about OXYCONTIN; this should be about managing "ADDICTS" and helping them. Educating students about every drug on this planet and what they make you feel like, what they cost and how one can get them? This is D.A.R.E; well this is NOT what I want my children to learn.

When I first started out in pain, I was given hundreds of mg's of "ANAPROX," "IBUPROPHEN" and on and on. The amount of Tylenol my small body ingested was absolutely enough to kill a person. Yet we read EVERY day about OXYCONTIN? What about all the deaths from aspirin, Tylenol (2-3 grams should be the limit). The medications that actually drill a hole through a stomach? Oh yes, and I actually had that happen to myself. The pain of ULCER, not fun and then weeks and months on a drug called "PREVACID" to clear it up. The reason was because I myself was being given tons of medications, as I mentioned, the ANAPROX, aspirin, IBUPROPHEN. This was all because my Internist knew nothing on how to treat pain, all those medications did was create more and more pain to deal with.

By the time I reached a DR who would listen, who actually treated me like a human with great humanity, I was in such horrible shape. Recently he mentioned my first letter to him, how scary he found it, I told him I NEVER want to see it. I never want to go back to the days of the suffering. Going backwards is not the answer, punishing the 50+ million Americans in pain is not the answer.

For those who are out there looking at anyone who takes Opioids in a responsible way, as "addicts", I sincerely hope that they never end up in pain. How would anyone like it?? Thank goodness there are companies out there who have created medications that can ease the pain. This is a world where there will always be emotional pain, and as long as that goes untreated. As long as we allow our children to read, watch and be educated about drugs, we will propitiate addiction, fun use of medications, and all other potential drug's out there.

I think it is time for a new wave in "EDUCATING" people.

Thank you for listening,

Kimberley L. Rosenstein