

Demonizing pain drug irresponsible: Oxycontin a valuable tool

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Re: "Drug ban would hurt pain sufferers," Letters, Aug. 6.

Thank you Dr. Rashiq for speaking up on behalf of people in pain.

I find it extremely sad that in the 21st century reporters seek to demonize medications simply because they fail to find all the facts. By doing so they simply sentence many people to lives of agony.

Oxycontin is a valuable tool to those practitioners who are brave enough to work in the much maligned area of pain. Is it a panacea to those suffering with pain? Of course not, but it can be, and is for many, an important part of treatment that allows them some quality of life.

Is addiction a problem in society? Yes, it is, but most abusers are just that and should be treated for their disease. There is plenty of evidence, as Dr. Rashiq points out, that when medication is used as it is meant to be, the chance of addiction is very low.

The original article tried to demonize Oxycontin by relating it to 250 deaths in Ontario. The simple fact is there is no official database of " Oxycontin-related deaths" in Canada, so this figure is wrong.

This is the same tactic used by the Orlando Sentinel, which recently printed a correction to its atrocious report about Oxycontin. When they actually did some reporting, they found they were in egregious error. Almost every overdose death involved multi-drug use (most illegal), and most overdose deaths should not have been attributed to Oxycontin. They apologized.

It is well known that chronic pain is undertreated in our society. There is very little formal education in our teaching facilities on pain, so please do not make the lives of those who already suffer in agony even more difficult through the lack of good reporting.

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