

[IMAGE]

## Would You Risk Your Life for Pain Relief?

By Editorial Staff

While no one can question the profound impact pain, whether acute or chronic, can have on your life, it's worth asking a simple question: Would you put your life in jeopardy to relieve your pain? A new opioid approved by the Food and Drug Administration last fall and available by prescription this month, "will kill people as soon as it's released," according to one doctor (president of the advocacy group Physicians for Responsible Opioid Prescribing) quoted in a [CNN.com article](#).

The opioid analgesic in question goes by the brand name Zohydro and contains hydrocodone in an amount said to be five times stronger than currently available painkillers. According to the CNN article, the FDA is tightening rules with regard to prescribing / dispensing of hydrocodone-containing products, and is increasingly concerned about their abuse / misuse. All of which raises the question: Why would it approve a new, more potent hydrocodone?

Common side effects from taking hydrocodone include such pleasantries as abnormally low blood pressure, drowsiness, faintness, dizziness, nausea and weakness. "Infrequent" side effects include fast or slow heartbeat, vocal cord swelling, collapsed portion of lung, trouble breathing, vision problems, incomplete or infrequent bowel movements, and a host of other potential issues. And then there's the rare (but not nonexistent) side effects, such as skin eruptions, hallucinations, nightmares, acute liver failure, and reduced production of white blood cells - the cells that form the basis for our immune system.

The next time your doctor prescribes a medication of any type, ask them: Is this the best option? Are there nondrug alternatives that could be just as effective – and infinitely safer? Don't be afraid to speak up; your health may depend on it.

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