

# WY- DUR

## Wyoming Drug Utilization Review Board

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*Debra Devereaux, R.Ph., M.B.A.*

*DUR Manager*

*William Harrison, M.D.*

*Chair*

*George Zaharas, R.Ph.*

*Vice Chair*

September 21, 2005

Dear Prescriber:

Our records show that you have prescribed Actiq® (transmucosal fentanyl).

The only FDA approved indication for Actiq® is the treatment of break through cancer pain.

Although Actiq® can be used for break through pain of a non-cancer origin, there are numerous other narcotics that are available and have FDA approval. A recent review of Actiq® revealed a majority of patients were taking several doses per day. The manufacturer does not recommend dosing more than 4 times daily. Dosing of Actiq® 4 times daily or more results in relatively level fentanyl levels in the blood stream<sup>1</sup>. This changes Actiq from a short acting narcotic with benefit in break through pain to a long acting agent. Numerous long acting narcotics are available that have FDA approval. Regular dosing of a short acting narcotic has been shown to increase dependence and tolerance of narcotics and is discouraged by many pain specialists.

Thank you for your assistance in caring for these patients and for your consideration of this information. Please do not hesitate to contact the Wyoming DUR Program or the Department of Health if you have comments, concerns or questions.

Sincerely,

*Debra S. Devereaux*

Debra S. Devereaux, M.B.A., R.Ph.  
Wyoming DUR Manager

<sup>1</sup> Cleary JF: Use of oral transmucosal fentanyl citrate as around-the-clock medication in patients with cancer. [Poster Presentation] American Pain Society 16th Annual Scientific Meeting. Hyatt Regency, New Orleans, La, October 23-26, 1997