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This notice is to inform you that on February 1, 2016, the ODG Formulary will make all long-acting opioids N drugs for first-line use. Specifically, this will change the status of Duragesic, MS Contin and Embeda (see <http://www.odg-twc.com/index.html?home.html#ODGUpdates>). The reason for this status change is that the current evidence increasingly indicates that no long-acting opioid should be first-line for treatment of acute or chronic non-malignant pain.

Almost all long-acting opioids have always been N drugs since the launch of the ODG Formulary on December 17, 2008, except for a few with less evidence of risk at that time. Every new long-acting opioid since then (e.g., Zohydro) started off as N as soon as they hit the market. The evidence against opioids in the last seven years has continued to get stronger and now none of these long-acting forms are supported, including the few existing ones that had been Y.

Regarding the timing of the change, the timing of Formulary updates directly follows updates to the evidence in the treatment guidelines. In this case, where an existing Y drug switches to N, we were sensitive to users in ODG states and elsewhere saying that, for example, during the legacy claim conversions, switched people from OxyContin (an N drug) to Duragesic, and planning time was needed to wean these patients or switch them a second time. At the same time, we need to balance that with the fact that we want to ensure that new patients are not being put on these drugs as soon as possible.

ODG's overall recommendation on opioids summarized in a nutshell is that all opioids are not recommended at all for chronic pain (as first-line drugs), and recommended only for severe acute pain for a short time, using an immediate release form. Here are the links, where you will find more detail:

"Not recommended as a first-line treatment for chronic non-malignant pain" [www.odg-twc.com/index.html?odgtwc/pain.htm#Opioidsforchronicpain](http://www.odg-twc.com/index.html?odgtwc/pain.htm#Opioidsforchronicpain)<<http://www.odg-twc.com/index.html?odgtwc/pain.htm#Opioidsforchronicpain>>

"Not recommended except for short use for severe cases, not to exceed 2 weeks." [www.odg-twc.com/index.html?odgtwc/low\\_back.htm#Opioids](http://www.odg-twc.com/index.html?odgtwc/low_back.htm#Opioids)<[http://www.odg-twc.com/index.html?odgtwc/low\\_back.htm#Opioids](http://www.odg-twc.com/index.html?odgtwc/low_back.htm#Opioids)>

Also, as you know, status N just means no to first-line use, but they may be approved after pre-authorization. You can expect to see these changes reflected in the NODG Formulary on 2/1/16.