

Duragesic® (Fentanyl Transdermal System)

Questions & Answers

Pronunciations:

Fentanyl: (FEN-ta-nil)

Duragesic: (Dur-ah-GEE-zik)

What is Duragesic?

Duragesic is a trade or brand name for Fentanyl transdermal patches.

What is Fentanyl?

Fentanyl is a narcotic. Under the Controlled Substances Act of the United States it is classified as a Schedule II Opiate (controlled substance) as are morphine, oxycodone, methadone, hydromorphone.

What are some of the other the common brand names for Fentanyl?

Brand names include: Actiq, Fentora, Sublimaze and Instanyl.

Who is the manufacturer of Fentanyl?

Duragesic is manufactured by ALZA Corporation and marketed by Janssen Pharmaceutica. Both companies are subsidiaries of Johnson & Johnson.

How is Fentanyl typically used?

The Fentanyl transdermal patch is used in chronic pain management. The primary use of the Fentanyl patch is to provide a continuous delivery of pain reliever to a patient with on-going pain. These patches are especially useful if taking medication orally is problematic.

How does the Fentanyl patch work?

The patch is placed directly on the skin (much like a bandage) and slowly delivers medication over time (sometimes up to 72 hours).

Why is Fentanyl typically prescribed?

This medication is a narcotic analgesic used to relieve chronic pain. It is often prescribed for cancer patients. The manufacturer does not recommend use of this medication for short-term pain, pain occurring after surgery or for mild or infrequent pain (on-and-off pain) which can be relieved by less powerful pain medications.

Fentanyl patches are only for people who are opioid-tolerant and have chronic pain that is not well controlled with other pain medicines. The patches are not to be used to treat sudden, occasional or mild pain or pain after surgery.

Is Fentanyl typically prescribed for children?

The stronger doses of Fentanyl (50mcg/hr or stronger) are for use only in patients that are already using narcotics for pain relief. The manufacturer does not recommend the use of this medication in children

less than 12 years old nor in children less than 18 years who weigh less than 110lbs (50kg) except in a research setting.

According to the manufacturer's own product information:

DURAGESIC® is only for adults and children 2 years of age or older who have already been using opioid narcotic pain medicines for a week or more. Children should ONLY use DURAGESIC® if they have been taking at least 60 milligrams (mg) of oral morphine daily or at least 30 mg of oral oxycodone daily or at least 8 mg oral hydromorphone daily or an equally strong dose of another opioid for a week or longer before starting DURAGESIC®.

Keep DURAGESIC® in a safe place away from children. Accidental use by a child is a medical emergency and can result in death. If a child accidentally is exposed to a DURAGESIC® patch, call your local Poison Control Center or the nearest emergency room right away.

What are some of the common side effects of Fentanyl?

This medication may cause constipation, lightheadedness, dizziness, drowsiness, stomach upset, nausea or flushing during the first few days.

What are some of the serious side effects of Fentanyl?

Life-threatening breathing problems can occur especially in patients who have not been given narcotic medicines in the past.

For more detailed information about Fentanyl, see the manufacturer's Duragesic (Fentanyl Transdermal System) product information included in this press packet.