



Orange County Migraine & Headache Center

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New Year's Newsletter 2018

Dear Patient,

The beginning of the year allows a “fresh start” including setting goals and for some, a new direction to take in life. **For our practice, the new direction for 2018 is to move towards being a narcotic/opioid free practice by the end of 2018.** Heightened scrutiny and increasing regulation for prescribing narcotics like hydrocodone has occurred in this county. Some pharmacies now set limits on how many days a narcotic may be dispensed. As prescribers, we are required to regularly monitor controlled medication use on a statewide system called CURES.

Our medical practice is devoted to helping those with headaches and mood disorders. We are not a pain practice and are not set up to do urine drug testing as pain practices commonly do as part of monitoring their patient's narcotic use. In addition, narcotics can work against good headache control by promoting medication overuse headache. Narcotics can create a condition called opioid hypersensitivity in which medications do not work as well. This is possible even with non-narcotic treatments such as triptans.

We realize this change in our practice will cause some of you to have to begin seeing a pain specialist if you are unable or unwilling to give up your narcotic. Our office will help in this process by referring you to a pain group that will work with you to take over the prescribing of the narcotic. We are actively meeting with pain groups to create a network of providers willing to see our patients.

During this process, we will continue to refill your narcotic as we don't want our patients to suffer withdrawal symptoms. However, any narcotic/opioid medication will only be filled as part of an office visit and cannot be requested to be mailed or picked up in our office. For most, that will mean a monthly visit and the amount prescribed must last 1 full month. Early refills will not be honored. Activity will be monitored monthly on the CURES data base.

Fortunately, there are many effective non-narcotic treatment options for migraine and other headache disorders. Getting off your narcotic may be one of your goals for 2018 - We can help.

In closing, this change in our practice is not meant to be a punishment for those of you taking narcotics. We are moving our practice in a healthier direction and hope you come with us in this journey.

Respectfully,

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Dedicated to the relief of pain caused by headaches and mood disorders