

Spotlight On Health

Relieving Pain Without Drugs Important As Bextra's Safety Questioned

(NAPSA)—An increasing number of Americans are relieved to learn about non-drug ways to ease pain now that safety questions have been raised about another well-known and widely used painkiller, Bextra.

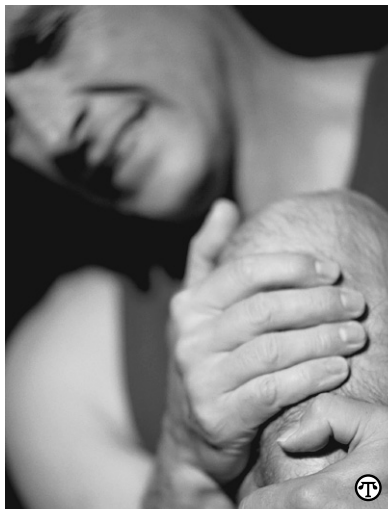
A leading consumer group, Public Citizen, urged the FDA to take the drug off the market. Both the FDA and Public Citizen raised concerns about the safety of Bextra, one of the so-called Cox-2 inhibitors. The Cox-2 drugs Vioxx and Bextra were once viewed as “wonder drugs” for arthritis and painful menstrual cycles.

Vioxx was one of the nation's most popular ways to treat pain and arthritis and was taken by an estimated 20 million people before studies linked it to a heightened risk of heart attack and stroke.

Researchers released information indicating that the chances for heart attack following prolonged use of Vioxx were four times greater than with older over-the-counter pain relievers. It has also been linked to angina and stroke. A University of Pennsylvania study released at a meeting of the American Cardiology Association indicated that those taking Bextra had a 2.19 times greater chance of heart attack, stroke, sudden death and Stevens Johnson Syndrome, a life threatening disorder in which blisters occur on the patient's body.

Many people are now seeking alternative therapies and investigating legal remedies. Those seeking non-drug alternatives to relieve chronic pain should discuss their plans with a physician. Alternative remedies include:

- MSM (Methyl Sulfonyl Methane), a compound normally found in foods. It's used to relieve



Anyone who's taken a recently recalled arthritis drug should speak to a doctor. Some may also want to speak to a lawyer.

the pain of osteoarthritis and help strengthen collagen in the joints.

- Glucosamine, primarily used to treat osteoarthritis. Research indicates that glucosamine is as effective as low doses of non-steroidal anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen. It appears to relieve pain and improve movement, slow the progression of the disease and protect joints from further damage.

- Wobenzym, an enzyme combination and a top-selling supplement in Europe, now available in North America.

- Bromelain, an anti-inflammatory and digestive aid used primarily in Japan, Hawaii and Taiwan.

Those who have suffered heart attacks and strokes while taking Bextra or Vioxx can explore legal remedies at www.painkillerinfo.com or by calling 800-320-5081.