



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

MEMORANDUM FOR ALMAJCOM/SG

JUL 31 2006

FROM: HQ USAF/SGO
110 Luke Ave, Room 400
Bolling AFB DC 20032-7050


SUBJECT: Use of Fentanyl Patches

A recent Medical Incident Investigation examined two deaths related to the improper use of fentanyl transdermal patches. A DoD Patient Safety Alert (see attached) and recommendations have circulated in the AFMS pharmacy channels, and measures have been taken at many of our medical treatment facilities, yet the high risk of this medication warrants wider and added emphasis. We must ensure that the prescription of fentanyl patches is tightly controlled and prohibited for use in acute pain and opiate naïve.

To ensure the safety of our patients, all facilities must comply with the following:

1. Prescription of fentanyl patches must be limited to pain specialists and other providers (e.g. oncologists) specifically authorized to use them.
2. If not yet accomplished, each facility should perform a drug utilization review of fentanyl patches to ensure adherence to FDA warnings.

My point of contact is Lt Col David Louder, AFMOA/SGOC, DSN 297-4073, or e-mail: david.louder@pentagon.af.mil. Patient safety requires constant vigilance. Thank you for your timely attention to this matter.


CHARLES B. GREEN
Major General, USAF, MC, CFS
Deputy Surgeon General

Attachment:
DoD Patient Safety Center Alert, 31 March 2006