



New Survey Sheds Light on Prescription Drug Use Among Women After Surgery in the United States

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Pacira and HealthyWomen Launch 'Voice Your Choice' Campaign Urging Patients to Know and Discuss Their Pain Control Options Before Surgery

PARSIPPANY, N.J., Nov. 17, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- One in every 15 patients who receive prescription painkillers (also called opioids or narcotics) following surgery ends up using these medications long-term,^{1,2} which can result in tolerance, dependence and addiction. According to a new national survey, a lack of doctor-patient communication about postsurgical pain management may be partly to blame. To help foster these important conversations, the [Postsurgical Pain Control: Voice Your Choice](#) campaign was launched today to raise awareness of pain control choices and empower women to discuss treatment plans with their doctor before surgery. The campaign is a joint collaboration of [Pacira Pharmaceuticals](#), a leader in providing pain control solutions for the acute care setting, HealthyWomen, a leading health information resource for women and Dr. Kristi Funk, renowned breast cancer surgeon and women's health advocate.

The survey of more than 700 women in the United States who had undergone surgery found that while over 90 percent of respondents were aware of the risk of addiction to narcotics, and would prefer not to use them to manage pain after their procedure, 80 percent still did. And while the women surveyed unanimously indicated wanting a choice in how their pain is managed, less than a third (27%) initiated a discussion about options with their doctor.

"The women we surveyed were savvy about narcotic-related risks. In fact, over a third of them reported personally knowing someone who developed an addiction from postsurgical use. I find it worrisome that women aren't expressing their concerns to their physicians, and as a result, are routinely receiving medications they prefer to avoid," said Dr. Funk, a board-certified surgical breast specialist and founder of the Los Angeles-based Pink Lotus Breast Center. "Today, more than ever, we have several alternatives to effectively treat pain after surgery that can reduce or even eliminate the need for narcotics. The *Voice Your Choice* campaign aims to educate women about these options and encourage them to initiate a discussion with their physician about their preference in pain treatment before surgery."

At the urging of public health officials and professional medical societies, physicians and hospitals are increasingly utilizing what is called a "multimodal approach" to manage pain after surgery, whereby a combination of medications are used before, during and after the procedure to block the various sources and pathways of pain. A typical multimodal regimen aimed at reducing the use of narcotics may include long-acting local anesthetics and anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen and aspirin.

"Women are often the primary healthcare decision-makers for themselves and their families, so it's crucial for them to stay abreast of the latest medical advances so they can make informed choices," said Beth Battaglini, R.N. and co-founder of HealthyWomen. "I encourage women to visit HealthyWomen.org/paincenter to learn more about non-narcotic pain management options after surgery, and access tools and resources to help foster a productive dialogue with their doctor."

About Postsurgical Pain Control: Voice Your Choice

The *Postsurgical Pain Control: Voice Your Choice* campaign aims to raise awareness of pain control choices and empower women to discuss their treatment plan with their doctor before surgery. Visit <http://healthywomen.org/paincenter> to learn more about postsurgical pain control options and how to Voice Your Choice with a physician. To join the conversation and share your stories please use #VoiceYourChoice on Twitter.

About the Survey

HealthyWomen surveyed 744 female readers ages 21 and over, who have had surgery in the last 10 years. The online survey, conducted jointly by Pacira Pharmaceuticals and HealthyWomen, measured women's experience and knowledge with narcotics and postsurgical pain. The survey was conducted May-June 2015.

About Dr. Kristi Funk

[Dr. Kristi Funk](#) is board-certified surgical breast specialist who founded the Pink Lotus Breast Center in 2007. She is an expert in minimally-invasive diagnostic and treatment methods for all types of breast disease. She has helped thousands of women through breast cancer treatment, including well-known celebrities like Angelina Jolie and Sheryl Crow, who have turned to her for her expertise.

About HealthyWomen

HealthyWomen (HW) is a leading nonprofit health information source for women. For nearly 25 years, women have been coming to HW for answers to their most pressing and personal health care questions. HW provides award-winning health information through a wide array of online content and print publications that are original, objective and reviewed and approved by medical experts. Its HON-certified website, www.HealthyWomen.org[®] has been recognized by ForbesWoman as one of the "Top 100 Websites for Women" for the third year in a row and was named the top women's health website by Dr. Mehmet Oz in O, The Oprah Magazine. To learn more, visit www.HealthyWomen.org.

About Pacira

Pacira Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (NASDAQ:PCRX) is a specialty pharmaceutical company focused on the clinical and commercial development of new products that meet the needs of acute care practitioners and their patients. The Company's in-depth knowledge of the needs of the postsurgical pain market, coupled with its passion for delivering improved patient care, drives a corporate commitment to providing solutions that address unmet medical needs and improve clinical results. Additional information about Pacira is available at www.pacira.com.

¹ Alam A, Gomes T, Zheng H, Mamdani MM, Juurlink DN, et al. Long-term analgesic use after low-risk surgery: a retrospective cohort study. Arch Intern Med. 2012;172(5):425-30.

² Carroll I, Bareika P, Wang CK, Wang BM, Gillespie MJ, et al. A pilot cohort study of the determinants of longitudinal opioid use after surgery. *Anesth Analg*. 2012;115(3):694-702.

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