



Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council's (GSSAC)
Prevention Center
 (509) 922-8383 * www.GSSAC.org



Working Together Toward
 Safe Communities
 Free From Substance Abuse

THE INFORMANT



Meth Watch Member e-Letter

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Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council's (GSSAC)
 Prevention Center
 Spokane County Meth Action Team (MAT)

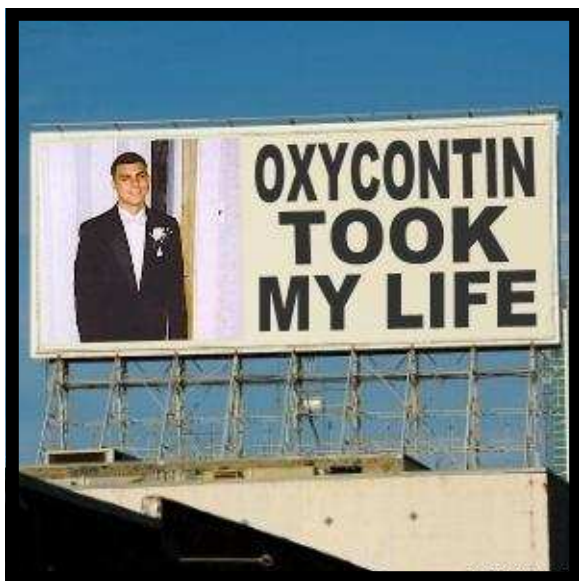
Reformulated, 'Abuse Resistant' OxyContin Approved by FDA

A new slow-release version of the powerful opiate painkiller OxyContin has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The new formulation is designed to prevent the time-released pills from being cut, broken, crushed or dissolved by users looking to get high on the drug. FDA officials described the change to the drug formula as incremental and acknowledged that it **will not be foolproof**.

"The new formulation may be an improvement that may result in less risk of overdose due to tampering, and will likely result in less abuse by snorting or injection; but it **still can be abused** or misused by simply ingesting larger doses than are recommended," the agency noted.

The FDA will require OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma to conduct a follow-up study to determine whether the new formula is effective in reducing misuse of the drug. (Join Together)



Facts About OxyContin

- Has been abused illicitly for the passed 30+ years
- Drugs abusers crush, snort, inject, smoke the pills to bypass the time-release outer layer
- 50.1 million prescriptions written in 2008
- Street Names: Oxys, Hillbilly Heroin, OCs, Cotton
- Why Oxyconin is so Popular:
 - Breaking time release provides quick rush
 - Produces a heroin like euphoria
 - Easy to obtain
 - Very potent

In Memory of Elliot J. Matos Jr.
 12/27/81—9/8/2001

Mothers Against Medical Abuse (www.MAMA.org)

From Meth Addict to MMA Potential Champion



It's not the typical start to a budding MMA career most of us are familiar with. Rising fighter Lyle "Fancy Pants" Beerbohm (13 – 0) transformed from a former crystal meth addict and convict into a fighter who dreams of fighting for the Strikeforce lightweight title.

After incarceration at Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla, Washington, things looked extremely bleak for Beerbohm. He betrayed his parents and lost his daughter, and everything else he had. There also wasn't much future for the struggling man in his mid-20's, as it was expected he would be released only to find his way back to drugs.

"It was rock bottom, definitely," Beerbohm said during a recent interview. The same day after being released from an 18-month felony drug sentence at Washington State Penitentiary, Beerbohm had his parents stop at a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu gym in the area. His father knew about Beerbohm's dreams, but may not have actually believed the ideas after first being told.

"I traded one addiction for another," Beerbohm said while looking back at his darker days. "I was watching TUF when I was in (prison), and thought I could really do it. My parents still though I was crazy, but they supported me from the beginning."

After just eight days of training, the now-clean fighter had his first amateur fight. He had 12 amateur fights in the first nine months of his career, and then decided to turn pro.

Since making the leap in April 2007 from amateurs, he's on a 13-fight win streak, and has finished 12 of 13 fights (7 TKOs, 5 submissions, and 1 decision). He's a well-rounded fighter whose "jiu jitsu is increasing at a fast rate," and "doesn't mind to stand and bang."

"Fancy Pants" is a nickname earned after wearing a pair of custom fight shorts made by his mother. He was unsure what fans would think of his bright colored shorts with interesting patterns, but most people liked the shorts.

The former drug addict has fought — and beaten — three UFC veterans (Ludwig, Rafaello Oliveira and Gerald Strebendt) in his short MMA career, and anticipates the most difficult fights Strikeforce CEO Scott Coker can put together.

Beerbohm temporarily trained at Team Quest — learned the skills he needed — and opened up the "Fancy Pants Fight Team" in Spokane, Washington.

"I don't travel any more to train for fights. My family, friends and team are all here in Spokane, I live close by, and it's great." (*Seattle Times*)

Number of Soldiers Seeking Opiate Abuse Treatment Skyrockets

The number of American soldiers seeking treatment for opiate abuse has skyrocketed over the past five years, at a time when the U.S. military has been surging forces into the heart of the world's leading opium producer. The number of American soldiers seeking treatment for opiate abuse has skyrocketed over the past five years, at a time when the U.S. military has been surging forces into the heart of the world's leading opium producer.

Pentagon statistics obtained by FoxNews.com show that the number of Army soldiers enrolled in Substance Abuse Program counseling for opiates has soared nearly 500 percent -- from 89 in 2004 to 529 last year. The number showed a steady increase almost every year in that time frame -- but it leaped 50 percent last year when the U.S. began surging troops into Afghanistan. Army troop levels in Afghanistan went from 14,000 as of the end of 2004 to 46,400 as of the end of 2009.

The Army did not break down the opiate-use data to show how many of the soldiers had been deployed to Afghanistan or what specific opiates they were using; opiate drugs include morphine, codeine and heroin. Lt. Col. Christopher Garver, a U.S. Army spokesman, said the military has been monitoring the uptick and is "concerned about it." He said the numbers reflect use not only of heroin, but of prescription drugs, that the abuse may not be "directly correlated to previous deployments," and that the increase could reflect an increase in reporting abuse -- not just drug use itself.

But the abundance and accessibility of heroin in Afghanistan surely account for part of the jump, said Lt. Col. Tony Shaffer, an Army Reserve officer who served in Afghanistan from 2003 to 2004. Shaffer said heroin abuse had "started to get out of hand" when he was in the country. He said a "black market" existed where troops on U.S. bases would trade goods to local Afghans in exchange for heroin. "It sounds like it kind of went way beyond that," he said after learning about the statistics. "It's inevitable. ... It's available. It's right there."

Shaffer, who now works with the Center for Advanced Defense Studies, said the availability of the product combined with high stress levels from multiple tours of duty amounts to a dangerous mix that can lead to hard drug abuse.

As a potential measure of Army stress levels, suicides have steadily climbed in recent years. The Army reported there were 160 possible suicides among active-duty soldiers in 2009, up from 140 the year before.

The opiate-use statistics were first obtained by the watchdog group Judicial Watch, which requested them through a Freedom of Information Act inquiry and provided them to FoxNews.com. The Army confirmed the authenticity of the report.

Chris Farrell, director of investigation with Judicial Watch and a former Army intelligence officer, said he sought the data to see what kind of impact Afghanistan's locally produced drug supply may be having on U.S. troops.

"This whole situation detracts, obviously, from mission readiness," he said, noting that actual hard drug use is probably far higher than the numbers show. "It's a public interest issue."

David Rittgers, a former Special Forces officer who served in Afghanistan from 2002 to 2004, said he didn't see opiate abuse among U.S. forces while he was in the war zone, though it was "rampant" in the Afghan forces. But he said the abuse of drugs ranging from painkillers to heroin could also occur after soldiers return home from deployment and have trouble readjusting to life in the States.

"This is an outlet, just as alcohol abuse is an outlet," said Rittgers, who is a reserve JAG officer and clarified that he is not a Pentagon spokesman.

While the number of soldiers seeking treatment has risen dramatically, urinalysis drug tests in Afghanistan do not reflect the trend. According to the Army data, soldiers tested positive for heroin use just twice in the past three years.

Western forces have given mixed signals about how heavily they are targeting opium drug production in Afghanistan, a major source of funding for the Taliban. The DEA said last month that opium seizures rose 924 percent in 2009. But recent reports have said the military is focusing far more on fighting the Taliban than in cutting off the opium supply at the source.

While some say going after opium farming worsens relations between Western forces and the local population, others say eradication is critical.

Gen. Barry McCaffrey, the former U.S. drug czar, said during a speech to the National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers last year that the military risks exposing its troops to drug abuse problems if it doesn't destroy the opium crops.

"I'd be astonished if we don't see soldiers who find 10 kilograms of heroin and pack it up in a birthday cake and send it home to their mother with a note that says, 'Don't open this package until I'm home,'" he said, according to an article on the speech in the Palm Beach Post.

(FOXNews.com)

