Propoxyphene Encyclopedia Article

Propoxyphene

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Propoxyphene

d-Propoxyphene (Darvon®) is an OPIOID drug that is structurally related to METHADONE. It is used clinically to produce analgesia when the level of PAIN is not severe. Its popularity rests largely on the belief that propoxyphene is less likely to cause addiction than CODEINE, a drug that is also used for relief of moderate levels of pain. Propoxyphene is typically used in combination with aspirin or acetaminophen. Its ANALGESIC effects are synergistic with those of aspirin and other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory agents.

When it was introduced into clinical medicine in the early 1960s, propoxyphene was not subject to special narcotic regulatory control. This fact may explain its early popularity, which was probably due to clinicians' unrealistic fears about the addictive potential of codeine and to the inconvenience of prescribing it under the narcotic regulations that were in effect before the the CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT of 1970 was passed.

Although propoxyphene has only one-half to two-thirds the potency of codeine, it has been used to control symptoms of the opioid WITHDRAWAL syndrome. It is not commonly abused because it produces unpleasant toxic effects at high doses.

See Also

Opiates/Opioids)

Bibliography

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