

December 29th, 1972

Dr. Hugh H. Hussay, M.D.
The Journal of the American Medical Association,
535 N. Dearborn,
Chicago, Illinois 60610.

Dear Doctor Hussay,

We are pleased to enclose a short report "Levomethadyl: Prolonged Duration of Opioid Effects, Including Cross Tolerance to Heroin, in Man" for your consideration for publication in the Journal of the American Medical Association. With the increasing use of methadone throughout the nation, the incidence of both overdose of methadone and illicit diversion have increased the importance of the development of a long-acting opiate substitute.

This study was undertaken at the request of the Veterans Administration who, anticipating a more general study of levomethadyl and methadone, felt the need for detailed information regarding levomethadyl. Recently Jaffe and his coworkers published their view of the acetylmethadols (JAMA 222: 437, 1972). In this they cautioned that the more general use of the acetylmethadols would be fraught with some risk. In our experience, their anticipated abuse of the acetylmethadols need not come about, and indeed the substitution of levomethadyl for methadone, if the patients are being treated according to the latest governmental guidelines, should decrease methadone spillage and opiate overdose deaths.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry

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