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**For Immediate Release**

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**Pain Medicine Experts Recommend Monitoring, Education  
For All Opioid Medicines**

*American Academy of Pain Medicine Submits Comments on REMS; Leaders in Pain  
Research and Treatment Available to Media to Discuss Abuse, Diversion, and Pain  
Treatment*

**May 27, 2009, Glenview, IL**— As the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) conducts public hearings this week on Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS), physician leaders from the [American Academy of Pain Medicine](http://www.painmed.org) (AAPM), the premiere medical association for physicians and teams who treat pain, are available to discuss [comments it submitted](#) to the FDA on behalf of their pain patients.

The most important aspect of the proposed FDA REMS is that it is developed with the best interests of patients in mind, according to the AAPM. Among the priorities its leaders gave the FDA:

1. Prescription monitoring programs with accurate and real-time data
2. Monitoring of all opioids, not only slow release opioids
3. Education for physicians, pharmacists, and patients about medicines and monitoring

“We urge the FDA to balance safety and access when considering REMS for opioid pain medicines,” said Scott Fishman, MD, University of California at Davis, board member and past president of the AAPM. “Under-treated pain and prescription drug abuse are both serious public health issues that deserve equal attention. The FDA has the opportunity to implement policy that will improve opioid safety, but it must use care to avoid unnecessary barriers that will reduce appropriate access for patients with serious and legitimate pain.”

On May 27-28, 2009, the FDA will hold public hearings on its proposed REMS for extended release pain medications such as morphine, oxycodone and methadone. AAPM members have committed to working with the FDA to ensure that REMS for pain medicine takes the needs of the medical community and pain patients in mind.

Leading researchers are available for comment through the American Academy of Pain Medicine by contacting Sue Thompson at 847 375 3686.

**About the AAPM**

For more than 25 years, the American Academy of Pain Medicine (AAPM) is the premiere medical specialty society representing more than 2,200 physicians practicing in the field of pain medicine. The Academy is involved in education, training, advocacy and research in the specialty of pain medicine. Information is available on the practice of pain medicine at [www.painmed.org](http://www.painmed.org).

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