

## Watch for Suzetrigine Rxs for Pain

The spotlight is on **suzetrigine (*Journavx*)**, the first med in a new class of **NON-opioid analgesics for acute pain in over 2 decades**.

Suzetrigine is a “selective sodium channel blocker”...that prevents pain signals in the peripheral nervous system from reaching the brain.

It's NOT a controlled substance...and it doesn't have the warnings we see with opioids about misuse, dangerously slowed breathing, etc.

You'll hear that suzetrigine reduces moderate to severe pain better and faster than placebo...and similar to hydrocodone/acetaminophen.

But these data are mainly in patients after a tummy tuck or bunion removal. And most were white women with an average age in the 40s.

It's too soon to say how well suzetrigine works in a broader patient population...or for other types of pain (chronic, etc).

If you get an Rx for suzetrigine, stay alert for look-alike/sound-alike errors. *Journavx* can be confused with *Jornay PM*...or suzetrigine with lamotrigine, especially since they both come in a 50 mg strength.

Pay close attention to sigs...and check e-Rx notes for added instructions. Most patients getting suzetrigine should take TWO 50 mg tablets po on an empty stomach first...then 1 tablet every 12 hours with or without food thereafter.

Anticipate payer rejects. Suzetrigine costs about \$15 per TABLET. And acute pain should usually first be treated with oral acetaminophen or an NSAID (ibuprofen, etc)...or the combo if needed.

If you dispense suzetrigine, ensure patient profiles are updated with current meds...to help catch interactions. For instance, suzetrigine should be avoided with itraconazole or rifampin.

And patients who use certain hormonal contraceptives (drospirenone, norgestimate, norgestrel, etc) will need to use backup methods (condoms, etc) while on suzetrigine and for 28 days after.

Ensure that an “Avoid grapefruit” auxiliary label is included with suzetrigine Rxs...since grapefruit can increase suzetrigine levels.

Pull in the pharmacist to educate about side effects (itching, etc).

Also notify the pharmacist to refill requests for suzetrigine. There are no data for using suzetrigine for acute pain beyond 14 days.

Get our suzetrigine quick skim graphic for more fast facts...and our resource, Analgesics for Acute Pain in Adults, to review other meds.

### Key References:

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