

POLICY & PRACTICE

Fetal Pain Bill Returns

Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.) has reintroduced legislation that would require abortion providers to notify women seeking abortions at 20 weeks' gestation about "substantial evidence" that the fetus can feel pain during the procedure. The "Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act" (S. 51) says that if the woman chooses to continue with the abortion after being given the information, she would be offered anesthesia for the fetus. "Unborn children can experience pain even more so than adults, as the baby has more pain receptors per square inch than at any other time in its life," Sen. Brownback said in a statement. Sen. Brownback introduced similar legislation in the last Congress.

The State of Stem Cell Research

Some members of Congress are answering the call made by President Bush in his State of the Union address last month to agree on clear standards for the use of human embryos in research. Reps. Diana DeGette (D-Colo.) and Michael Castle (R-Del.) wrote a letter to President Bush asking him to expand federal funding for embryonic stem cell research to lines derived after Aug. 9, 2001, but only if the lines have been derived ethically. The representatives plan to introduce legislation soon proposing that embryos would only be used if they were developed for the purpose of in vitro fertilization and would otherwise be discarded. In addition, their proposal would require that there be no financial or other inducements to donate the embryos to research. In his State of the Union speech last month, President Bush praised the medical research being done at the National Institutes of Health but vowed to ensure that human embryos would not be created for experimentation or grown for body parts and that human life should never be bought and sold. "To build a culture of life, we must also ensure that scientific advances always serve human dignity, not take advantage of some lives for the benefit of others," he said.

Prevention First Act

Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) recently introduced legislation aimed at expanding access to preventive health services that help reduce unintended pregnancies and abortions. The "Prevention First Act" (S. 20) calls for increased funding for teen pregnancy prevention and emergency contraception education. The legislation would also require private health plans to provide the same level of prescription contraception coverage as they do for other prescription drugs and services. The bill would also ensure that sexual assault victims receive accurate information about emergency contraception and are provided with EC upon request in hospital emergency departments.

Abstinence Education Funding

The Bush Administration is seeking \$206 million in fiscal year 2006 to fund abstinence education activities. The request is a \$39 million increase over current funding levels. The money would help "educate adolescents and parents about the health risks of early sexual activity and

provide the tools needed to make healthy choices," Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt said. Under the budget proposal, the entire \$38 million increase would go toward community-based programs, which operate under the most restrictive definition of abstinence, according to the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association. Susanne Martinez, vice president for public policy for Planned Parenthood Federation of America calls the proposal a waste of money in a tight fiscal environment. "This is throwing money in a direction that's not

very useful," she said. Evidence shows that abstinence-only education is not as effective as comprehensive sex education, Ms. Martinez said.

New HHS Chief and Medicaid

Medicaid reform will be high on the agenda for HHS Secretary Leavitt. "Medicaid is not meeting its potential," Mr. Leavitt, former governor of Utah and former head of the Environmental Protection Agency, said at health care congress sponsored by the Wall Street Journal and CNBC. "It's rigid, inflexible, inefficient, and, worse yet, not financially sustainable. We need to have a serious conversation about Med-

icaid." Among the ideas he's considering are negotiating reductions in the prices Medicaid pays for prescription drugs and closing loopholes relating to coverage for long-term care. He also wants to stop states from manipulating Medicaid rules to increase their federal matching funds. President Bush in the meantime focused on medical liability reform and health savings accounts in his State of the Union address, asking Congress to move forward on tax credits to help low-income workers buy insurance, and on establishing community health centers in impoverished counties.

—Mary Ellen Schneider

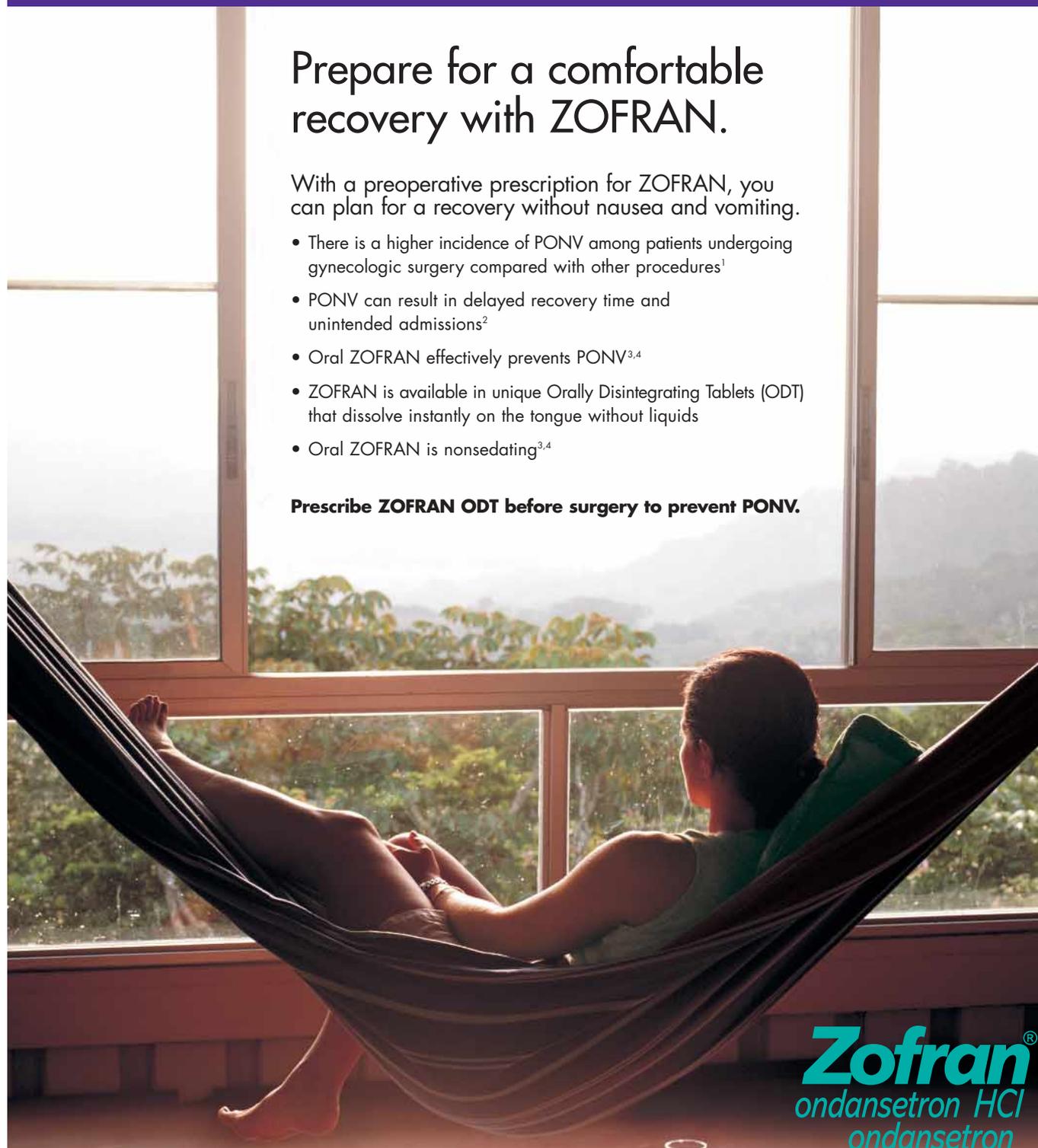
For prevention of postoperative nausea and vomiting (PONV)

Prepare for a comfortable recovery with ZOFRAN.

With a preoperative prescription for ZOFRAN, you can plan for a recovery without nausea and vomiting.

- There is a higher incidence of PONV among patients undergoing gynecologic surgery compared with other procedures¹
- PONV can result in delayed recovery time and unintended admissions²
- Oral ZOFRAN effectively prevents PONV^{3,4}
- ZOFRAN is available in unique Orally Disintegrating Tablets (ODT) that dissolve instantly on the tongue without liquids
- Oral ZOFRAN is nonsedating^{3,4}

Prescribe ZOFRAN ODT before surgery to prevent PONV.



Zofran[®]
ondansetron HCl
ondansetron
Proven Prevention

Phenylketonurics: ZOFRAN ODT contain phenylalanine
Pregnancy Category B

The most commonly reported adverse events in patients receiving ZOFRAN in clinical trials were headache (5% to 27%), diarrhea (<1% to 16%), constipation (<1% to 9%), fever (<1% to 8%), and malaise/fatigue (0% to 13%).⁵

 GlaxoSmithKline

Visit www.ZOFRAN.com

Please see brief summary of Prescribing Information on adjacent page.

