

Hydromorphone Encyclopedia Article

Hydromorphone

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Hydromorphone

Hydromorphone is a semisynthetic OPIOID analgesic (painkiller) derived from thebaine, an ALKALOID of the OPIUM poppy (*PAPAVER SOMNIFERUM*). It is one of the most widely used and effective analgesics for moderate to severe PAIN and is often referred to as Dilaudid, one of the brand names under which it is sold. Its potency is almost eightfold greater than is morphine's. Structurally, it is quite similar to MORPHINE but most like dihydromorphone, differing only in the replacement of the hydroxyl (-OH) group at the 6-position with a ketone (=O). Thus, it is not surprising that hydromorphone has many of the same side effects—including sedation, constipation, and depression of breathing. Chronic use will produce TOLERANCE AND PHYSICAL DEPENDENCE, much like morphine. This drug is reported to have high abuse potential, perhaps due, in part, to its very high potency.

Figure 1 *Hydromorphone*

Bibliography

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