

# The Mortar & Pestle:

MD Custom Rx's monthly e-newsletter

August 2020



262.373.1050  
[MDCustomRx.com](http://MDCustomRx.com)

## Greetings!

Thank you for entrusting in the compounding services at MD Custom Rx to help meet the unique medication needs of your patients. We are excited to share our monthly newsletter with you and look forward to continuing to be your medication problem solvers. Please don't ever hesitate to let us know how we can be of further assistance to you and your practice.



Sincerely,  
*Dan, Monica and John*

## Low Dose Naltrexone and Ketamine for COVID Treatment - A Clinical Trial

Ideal new treatments for novel Coronavirus-19 (COVID-19) would help halt the progression of disease in patients prior to the need for a ventilator, and also provide a rescue treatment for patients with severe disease. Treatments are needed that are affordable and available in quantities sufficient to treat large numbers of infected people.



Naltrexone, a drug originally approved for treating alcoholism and opiate addiction, can be used in lower than standard doses (e.g., 4.5mg orally at bedtime) to provide pain relief and anti-inflammatory benefit by inhibiting cellular proliferation of T- and B- cells and blocking Toll-like receptor 4 (TLR4). Low Dose Naltrexone (LDN) appears to reduce production of multiple cytokines including IL-6 and is available as an oral preparation. As such it is ideal to use to attempt to modify progression of disease, and it can easily be given to both hospitalized patients and patients in the community.

Ketamine, a drug approved as an anesthetic, may be able to interrupt the inflammation that causes the worst COVID-19 symptoms. A new study will investigate the potential benefit in a randomized, blinded trial.

A clinical trial involving both medications and sponsored by Beaumont Health of Michigan began April 29, 2020 and plans to enroll 500 participants. The trial will measure the ability of LDN (Low Dose Naltrexone) to reduce the progression of disease in participants with COVID-19. In this study, naltrexone or placebo will be given to participants in early stages of COVID-19 infection in a randomized, double blinded manner, whereas the use of ketamine will be unblinded and given as a rescue agent should a participant's progress. Additionally, should a participant be ineligible for the randomized portion of the study due to already being in a more advanced stage of the disease, they will be given the opportunity to enter the trial to receive ketamine without being randomized to receive a placebo.

<https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04365985>

---

## Low-Dose Naltrexone Therapy for Psoriasis

Low-dose naltrexone regulates lymphocyte responses, reduces cytokine production, and likely reduces mast cell activity. Two recent reports suggested that low-dose naltrexone is a beneficial and convenient therapy for psoriasis. Patients included 13 females, 2 males; mean age 57 years; mean psoriasis duration 16 years. Of the patients, 8 had psoriatic arthritis. In the past, 5 had completely failed and 10 had partially responded to =1 topical therapies. Patients used a self-assessed Likert scale and the response to 4.5 mg of oral naltrexone was as follows: 8/15 marked improvement; 2/15 somewhat improved; and 5/15 unchanged. Three adverse events included insomnia, diarrhea, and self-limited headache. In conclusion, marked improvement was seen by 53% of the 15 patients.

[Int J Pharm Compd. Mar-Apr 2020;24\(2\):94-96.](#)

---

## Sjogren's Syndrome and Clinical Benefits of Low-Dose Naltrexone Therapy: Case Reports

"Sjogren's syndrome (SS) is a chronic autoimmune disorder that causes the inflammation of the lacrimal and salivary glands, resulting in dryness of the eyes and mouth. In addition, fatigue and musculoskeletal pain, often described as aching, are very common." This report describes two patients with SS whose conditions responded favorably to a treatment with LDN therapy.

Case 1: 66yo female with documented SS based on a history of dry eyes and dry mouth, joint pain, and elevated anti-SSA and anti-SSB antibodies whose joint symptoms responded to treatment with LDN. She had previously been treated with plaquenil but had decreased the dose due to concerns about the risk of retinal toxicity, then she stopped plaquenil completely because she felt well. Within four months of discontinuing the drug, she developed mild joint pain and her ESR increased. Due to increasing pain she resumed plaquenil 200 mg daily. However, her symptoms persisted and her ESR remained elevated. She elected to try LDN after she improved with a one-week course of prednisone. Following one month of LDN 1 mg orally daily, she noted less pain and inflammation. Her ESR went down and CRP normalized. LDN was increased to 2 mg daily. Three years later, she remained asymptomatic with a normal ESR of 23 mm/h and a normal CRP of 2.1 mg/L.

Case 2: 24yo female with documented SS. She had a five-year history of chronic widespread body pain, fatigue, headaches, and brain fog, with very high measures of inflammation. She continued to be symptomatic, despite a gluten free diet, physical therapy, and antidepressants. Her medications included IV gamma globulin. Hydrocodone/acetaminophen 10/325 5 tabs daily, cyclobenzaprine, diphenhydramine, metformin, topiramate, baby aspirin, and metoprolol. She noted dry eyes and dry mouth. Lab work showed a positive anti-SSA antibody and elevated ESR at 90 mm/h and CRP at

14.2 mg/L. Her globulin was 4.8 g/dL (normal less than 3.7 g/dL). She was started on LDN 0.5 mg po daily which was increased weekly up. Five weeks after starting LDN she was taking 2.5 mg daily and her ESR and CRP improved to 42 mm/h and 6.8 mg/L respectively. She stated her joint pain and headache were significantly better. Six months after starting LDN she was taking 4.5 mg and noted fatigue. The LDN dosage was gradually increased over the next two months to 8.5 mg. One year after starting LDN, her headaches were better, but she had persistent pain which corresponded to trigger points consistent with fibromyalgia. The patient complained of fatigue. Her CRP was normal (3.5 mg/L) and her ESR was also normal (16 mm/h).

In the initial pilot study that used LDN in the treatment of fibromyalgia, the baseline sedimentation rate was a significant predictor of clinical response to LDN. Dry eyes and dry mouth did not improve with the use of naltrexone in these two patients.

[Cureus 12\(7\): e8948.](#)

## “Maskne” - Face Masks and Skin Irritation

“Maskne” – or mask acne – can result from regular or prolonged use of face masks. Trapped moisture, bacteria, oils, and dirt can clog pores and contribute to acne, rosacea, folliculitis and irritation. Skin can also be damaged by friction if masks rub the bridge of the nose, cheekbones, or behind the ears.



To help decrease the occurrence and severity of these problems, wash or replace masks frequently. It's helpful to wash masks and the face with a fragrance-free cleanser. Using fragrance-free moisturizer that contains ingredients such as ceramide, hyaluronic acid and dimethicone can help protect your skin without clogging pores.

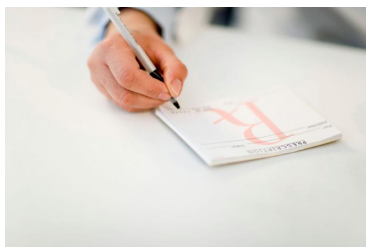
We can compound facial cleansers that contain ingredients such as salicylic acid, niacinamide, and glycolic acid. Ask us about medicated gels to help with minor skin irritation, itching, redness and mild blemishes, including bases that may improve the appearance of red and blotchy skin.

<https://www.oregonclinic.com/about-us/blog/tips-dealing-maskne>

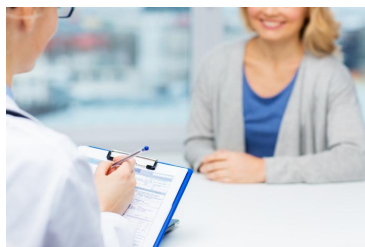
***Ask our compounding pharmacist for more information about customized medications to meet specific patient needs.***

## MD Custom Rx Educational Events

We regularly offer educational events at the pharmacy. Be sure to share our events with your patients. [VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#) to see our schedule and to register. If you are interested in speaking on a topic, please contact the pharmacy.



**Write a Prescription  
for a Compound**



**Collaborative BHRT  
Prescribing**



**PCAB  
Accreditation**

Learn more about how to write a prescription for a compounded preparation.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Learn more about our Collaborative BHRT Prescribing Program.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Why it's important to use a PCAB Accredited Compounding Pharmacy?

[LEARN MORE](#)

### Would you share your experience with MD Custom Rx?

At MD Custom Rx, we strive to provide the best quality of care. Your comments are important to us and they will help us to continue to improve the services we provide.

[Please take a moment to review us.](#)

