



We try to walk the line

This month, we feature an article (page 569) and editorial (page 580) on inhaled insulin.

Whenever we review a new drug, we risk being perceived as being on the marketing train promoting the drug. There is a line between perceived promotion and the timely presentation of new therapies. Even if you never thought about that line, we worry daily about tripping over it.

We try to focus our reviews on new drugs that represent an important new advance—often the first of a new class of drug. Often physicians will have questions on how to use these drugs, potential interactions, and contraindications.

In other instances, we may review a drug that is getting particular attention in the lay press or is being aggressively promoted. We know your patients are going to be asking you about the drug, and we want to give you the information to answer those questions.

We ask our authors to be objective and critical, outlining the strengths and weaknesses of any new therapy. We try to talk not just about clinical efficacy, but issues of cost and insurance coverage.

We look especially closely at the authors for bias and obtain extra reviews when we feel close scrutiny is warranted. In the case of the inhaled insulin article, we requested an editorial by Dr. James Stoller, a member of the US Food and Drug Administration advisory panel that examined Exubera, the first inhaled insulin to be approved. He discusses his concerns about the pulmonary effects of inhaled insulin and the need for diligent monitoring.

Our mission is to provide timely information on new therapies and new concerns regarding old therapies or diseases in a format that is (we hope) readable as well as practical. We hope our journal will make your job a little easier when fielding questions from patients and sorting through promotional materials.

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