Hydrocodone combo products reclassified as Schedule II

October 2 2014

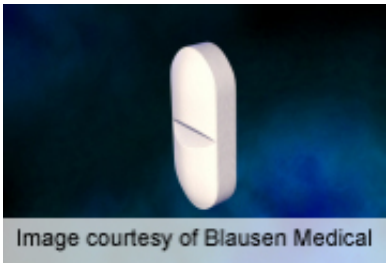
Image courtesy of Blausen Medical

(HealthDay)—A new rule taking effect Oct. 6 reclassifies hydrocodone combination products as Schedule II controlled substances, which will impact prescribing practices for these products, according to a report from the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

The new rule does not allow refills for prescriptions written after Oct. 6, 2014, although prescriptions issued earlier can be refilled through April 8, 2015. Pharmacies will no longer be able to fill prescriptions delivered over the phone or via fax; electronic prescriptions can be used if state law permits, if the prescriber is certified to prescribe these substances, and if the pharmacy is certified to accept electronic prescriptions.

In addition, depending on the state restrictions, non-physician health care team members will not necessarily be able to issue prescriptions for these products. Patients should be made aware of these issues and the

new procedures that they will need to follow.

"The American Medical Association and other groups have warned the DEA about the potential unintended consequences of reclassifying hydrocodone combination products since the agency made the proposal early last year," according to an AMA news release. "Eliminating phoned-in prescriptions and refills could make it difficult for some patients to get the pain relief they need, especially patients in nursing homes and those with persistent pain and disabilities."

More information: DEA Rule
AMA News Release