CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An injectable pharmaceutical composition, comprising:

a solution of 3-acyl-buprenorphine, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, in a biocompatible organic solvent, wherein the injectable pharmaceutical composition exhibits a steady release profile lasting over one week when injected into a patient or an animal,

wherein the acyl group comprises an alkylcarbonyl group, and wherein the alkyl portion of the alkylcarbonyl group is a straight-chain or a branched-chain, having 5-12 carbon atoms,

wherein the biocompatible organic solvent is N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone; and

wherein the 3-acyl buprenorphine, or the pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, is present at a concentration of 30% to 60% w/v.

2. The injectable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, wherein the acyl group comprises an arylcarbonyl group, wherein an aryl portion of the arylcarbonyl group is an aromatic group having 6-18 carbons.

3. The injectable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, further comprising a preservative selected from the group consisting of methylparaben, propylparaben and benzylalcohol.

4. The injectable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, wherein the injectable pharmaceutical composition is formulated for subcutaneous, intramuscular or intradermal injection.