

Pain Management: Opioid Use, Misuse, and Principles of Prescribing Jessica Steen OD, FAAO, Dipl. ABO





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## Understanding Pain Mechanisms

- Multiple molecular pathways which lead to a single pain syndrome
  - i.e. migraine. Even in a small subgroup, there may be variation in response to treatment
- Common pathways in pain, addiction, and depression • May look beyond targeting the mu-receptor and type 3 dopamine receptor

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## Challenges in Clinical Trials

- The placebo effect is real · Biological, genetic, neurocircuitry mechanisms underlie the response
- How do we measure pain? · Currently, most common used pain assessment measures are subjective i.e. numerical pain rating scales
- · Plus emotional, experiential, cultural, and cognitive factors

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#### WHO Ladder Approach · General approach to pain management: Begin with non-opioid medications Mild opioids (i.e. codeine) +/- adjuvants +/- non-opioids · Adjuvants enhance analgesics, may be prescribed to control side effects Nausea, depression, insomnia, anxiety • i.e. pregabalin, gabapentin, amitriptyline



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- Inhibit COX-1 and COX-2
- Ibuprofen
  - Advil or Motrin IB (200mg tablets)
  - Up to 1200mg daily (OTC)
  - Up to 2400mg daily (Rx) for pain (although maybe up to 3200mg/day for rheumatoid arthritis)
  - Available as 100mg, 200mg, 400mg, 600mg, 800mg tabs

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Topical Ocular NSAIDs Block COX-1 and COX-2 · Leaves the leukotriene pathway unaffected Reduces prostaglandin formation · Reduces pain at the level of the ocular surface Some indication that inhibition of COX-2 inhibits MIMPs within the corneal epithelium • Pan 2002, Ottino 2001

Ocular ADRs of Topical NSAIDs · Generally very mild Stinging upon instillation • Corneal infiltrates, corneal melting, delayed epithelial growth (most problematic with 'old' generic Voltaren) • Those at risk include RA, corneal denervation, DM, dry eye · Prolonged use can mask signs of infection Infiltrates (WBC) due to over production of leukotrienes which cause leakage of WBC

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- Bromsite (bromfenac sodium 0.075%)-2016—and generic (February 2024)
- BID
- Durasite vehicle
- First NSAID to be approved for 'preventing ocular pain in patients undergoing cataract surgery'
- \$285 for 5mL bottle
  Bromfenac should not be used in patients with sulfite allergy
- Ilevro (nepafenac sodium 0.3% suspension)-2012 QD for treatment of postoperative inflammation and reduction of ocular pain (2 weeks) \$340+ for 3mL bottle

















#### General Pharmacokinetics

- Well-absorbed orally
- Cross placental barrier
- · Metabolized by hepatic enzymes, eliminated by the kidneys
- Codeine, hydrocodone, tramadol target the mu opioid receptor
   G protein coupled receptors in the brain and spinal cord (and gut)





- Increasing trend of concurrent use of benzodiazepines
   Alprazolam (Xanax), lorazepam (Ativan), clonazepam (Klonopin)
- Combination is correlated with higher levels of pain, physical and mental health disability
  - Increased risk of opioid related fatality



### Opioid Side Effects and Contraindications

• Caution in treatment of pain in children younger than 12

• Codeine and tramadol contraindicated in under 12 years of age

• Warning in breastfeeding mothers and pregnant individuals

















#### Office of Public Affairs U.S. Department of Justice

Dentist Sentenced for Unlawfully Distributing Opioids That Caused Patient's Death

Pain Management Physician and Former Member of Kentucky's Medical Board Convicted of Unlawfully Prescribing Opioids

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## How Did We Get Here?

- Opioids are very effective in management of acute pain
   Are *always* highly rewarding and addictive
- Overprescribing amongst certain providers led to drug diversion
- In chronic pain (>3-6 months), overall, opioids are less effective
- · Tolerance can develop-which can lead to addiction
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Synthetic opioids also found in cocaine, crystal meth, pills, and heroin

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 Shame, guilt, embarrassment
 Lack of treatment options precipitates long-term effects on patients and families



 18% of 1.1 million Medicare Part D enrollees received medication to treat substance abuse disorder
 Vs. 6% in Florida...

https://oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/naloxone-opioid-disparities-one-pager-508.pdf





















- To reduce risk of overdose-prescribers are encouraged to coprescribe naloxone to patients at risk of overdose
  - Dosage >50 MME daily
- Concomitant respiratory condition (COPD, sleep apnea)
- Concomitant benzodiazepines
- Non-opioid substance use disorder
- Excessive alcohol use
- Mental health disorder

# Naloxone Prescribing Trends

#### • Also—

- Patients who are at high risk of experiencing (or responding to) an opioid overdose
- Heroin, or synthetic opioid useOther illicit drugs-including stimulants
- Concern of fentanyl contamination
- Receive treatment for opioid use disorder
- · History of opioid misuse and recently released from incarceration

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## Looking Ahead

- Supervised consumption sites AKA overdose prevention centers
   Allow people to consume pre-obtained drugs under supervision of trained staff
  - Provide sterile injection supplies, answer questions on safe injection practices, offer first aid if needed
  - Arrange for referrals to drug treatment and social support programs
     Exist in 12 countries; about 100 centers worldwide
  - Canada, Europe, Australia

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- 2) Shared decision-making is central
- 3) Discontinuing opioids after extended use can be challenging (and harmful)





- Dottoin inie.
  - 1) Maximize nonopioid pain medication • This does not require failure on all non-opioid medications
- 2) Only prescribe opioids when anticipated benefits outweigh risks
- 3) When opioids are needed-prescribed at the lowest effective dosage
- Dowell D, Ragan KR, Jones CM, Baldwin GT, Chou R. CDC Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Pain – United States, 2022. MMWR Recomm Rep 2022;71(No. RR-3):1–95. Dbt: <u>http://dx.doi.org/10.1585/mmur.pr103a1</u>







There is no validated way to predict who will benefit and who will experience harm



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## Prescribing Reminders

- Aim to treat for the shortest period of time possible • Maximum number of days varies by State
- Lowest effective dose of immediate-release opioid drug • Low dose = 40 morphine milligram equivalent (MME)
  - Moderate = 41-90 MME
- High >91 MME
- Patients who do not respond to low or medium dose will typically not respond to higher dosages

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# Tramadol • Trade Name: Ultram

- · Weak mu-receptor agonist; inhibits reuptake of serotonin
- Synthetic analogue of codeine (less effective)
- Opioid analgesic
  - · Avoid in history of anaphylaxis secondary to codeine or
- other opioids • Analgesia 1 hour after administration
- Analgesia i noui antei auministrati

## Tramadol

Tramadol (MME 0.1)

- 40 MME/day = 400mg of tramadol per day
  50mg tabs (immediate release); maximum 8 tablets per day
- i.e. 50 mg q4h (6 tablets per day) = 300 mg per day = 30
- MME/day
- i.e. 2 x 50mg q6h (8 tablets per day) = 400mg per day = 40 MME/day
- Take one tablet by mouth every 4 hours
- · Take two tablets by mouth every 6 hours
- · Contraindications and cautions are similar to codeine

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What Else Have We

Got?













 • Remove the foreign body

 • 30G needle

 • 1 drop of 5% homatropine instilled in office

 • Prescribed topical antibiotic (Polytrim QID)

 • Recommended (FL) to take over the counter ibuprofen (2x200mg every 4 hours

 • Max 1200mg or 2400mg/day?

 • Emergency contact information provided; scheduled for follow up next day

 • Lost to follow up...telephone number disconnected

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- Pain is the complex manifestation that involves the neurologic, endocrine, and immune system
- Oral and topical ocular agents are effective in the treatment of short term pain
- Prescribe opioids when <u>necessary</u>, as allowed by your State but must ensure to do your due diligence as an Optometric Physician





