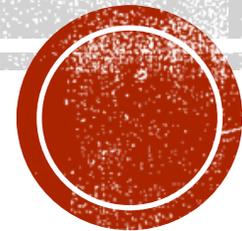


SAFE OPIATE PRESCRIBING IN THE ELDERLY

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INTRODUCTION

- Institute of Medicine data estimates chronic pain to be as high as 57%
- Nearly 12 million Medicare beneficiaries received at least one prescription for an opioid pain killer in 2015.
- Chronic pain common due to increased prevalence of painful conditions with aging



STEPS TO TREAT PAIN IN OLDER ADULTS

- Thorough evaluation of the condition(s) causing pain.
 - Medical history
 - Current medications
 - Physical Exam
- Counseling about realistic treatment expectations. (prevent futile drug prescribing)
- Consider non-pharmacologic interventions
 - Exercise, PT and OT, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Alternative Therapies
 - Massage
 - Yoga
- Consider non-opiate treatment options
 - Acetaminophen
 - Gabapentin



APPROACH TO SAFE OPIATE PRESCRIBING

- When opioid is indicated, start at 25% - 50% of the usual adult dose. Titrate slowly. (Start low and go slow)
 - High doses of opioids are not associated with improved efficacy
 - High doses are associated with increased adverse effects, including cognitive impairment, increased risk of aberrant behavior, and death. May also lead to opioid-induced hyperalgesia
- Select an appropriate opiate
 - Morphine
 - Metabolites renally. May result in up to 50% increase in plasma concentrations.
 - Increased risk of side effects
 - Oxycodone (better choice)
 - Less than 15% renally excreted. Better option for older adults
 - Cleaner drug than morphine



PREVENTING MISUSE AND DIVERSION

- Frequent follow up and patient education (goal of pain management / pain agreement)
 - Assess opiate use (frequency taken and last dose)
- Limiting quantities and prevent early refills
- Pill counts
- Urine Drug Screen
 - Provides snapshot of use
 - May detect opiates taken in the last day (up to 3 days for chronic use)
- Prescription Drug Monitoring Program
 - <https://hawaii.pmpaware.net/login>
 - Prescription data obtained from pharmacies
 - Purpose is to identify potential abuse or diversion.
- Use all of the above in combination



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- Centers around appropriate prescribing and optimal drug selection
- Incorporate measures to prevent abuse, diversion, and overdose

