PAIN RELIEF CONNECTION
THE PAIN INFORMATION NEWSLETTER

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In the News

- Is hoarding opioids a predictable outcome of tighter regulatory controls? Two scientists think so from personal experience & understanding behavior.
- Pain patients suffer when legislators act to curtail opioid prescribing without seeing the disability, suffering, endured by those with chronic pain.
- Progress is being made in the development of novel selective Na channel blockers to better treat pain without side effects that limit current therapies.
- CMS strategy to restrain opioid misuse, balances risk/benefit of opioid therapy by quantity limits & better access to drug (not pain) treatment.
- CMS announces its plans to reduce the overutilization of opioids to cut the most egregious cases of overuse, align CDC guidelines & limit access.
- The FDA will discuss the known and suspected risks and benefits of oxymorphone; that may grant abuse-deterrent status or pull it from the market.
- In 2016, ¾ of Massachusetts opioid-related deaths involved fentanyl, while heroin was present in half of deaths with some both drugs in their bodies.
- The National Committee for Quality Assurance wants public comments (to 3/22/17) for the Use of opioids at high dosage or from multiple providers.

Journal Watch  [MGHers can obtain articles through the Treadwell home page]

**Journal Watch** [MGHers can obtain articles through the Treadwell home page] (continued)


**Pain Resources on the Web:**

- A free 2nd case-based learning module for (CoEPE) interprofessional pain education “Beverly” with Burning Mouth Syndrome is now posted for use.

- Experts around the globe showcase what is known about fibromyalgia, weigh in on the pathophysiology, psychosocial contributors & treatments.

- A “Patient’s Guide to Living with Rheumatoid Arthritis” has useful information, personal stories and a good section on nondrug symptom control.

- Evidence-based resources on safe opioid prescribing available on a phone app to guide clinicians in safe and effective use of these medications.

- Podcast on Pain & Palliative Care in Children includes sections on pain assessment, management (e.g. analgesic principles) & barriers to treatment.

- Entertaining 8-minute TED talk on: Pain is it a symptom or a disease? presented clearly Dr. Elliot Krane.

**Complementary Integrative Health** (formerly called Complementary Alternative Medicine [CAM])

- Cancer patients are advised to take analgesics, but rarely encouraged to use nondrug methods, even though most patients use them.

- A growing number of studies show acupuncture helps different types of neuropathic pain (e.g. diabetic, Bell’s palsy & carpal tunnel syndrome).

- Mindfulness can help chronic pain patients with long-term opioid use restore a sense of joy in their life with better emotion regulation & pain coping.

- Cochrane review shows yoga has a small effect (not clinically significant) on chronic non-specific low back pain at 3-6 months without serious harm.

- Combined treatment with chondroitin and glucosamine for 6 months is no better than placebo at reducing knee joint pain and improving functioning.

**Pain-Related Education Opportunities**

- March 16 – 19, 2017 Pain as a Public Health Issue is the AAPM theme for physicians and treatment teams at its annual conference in Orlando, FL

- May 17 – 20, 2017 American Pain Society 36th Annual Meeting, offers innovative, interdisciplinary pain science educational sessions Pittsburgh, PA

- June 26 – 30, 2017 Evaluating and Treating Pain; an annual Harvard Medical School training program in Boston, MA

**MGH Calendar**

- Tools and Techniques for Effective Pain Management – Thursday, April 13th, 2017 Founders House 325 @ 8AM – 1PM Sign-up.

- Palliative Care Grand Rounds are Wednesday mornings from 8AM – 9AM, Ether Dome. email: Margaret Spinale for more information.

- Check for details & schedule of MGH Interprofessional Pain Rounds in the Ether Dome. Email Paul Arnstein.

**MGH Pain Resources**

The Patient Education Television: Dial 4-5212 from patient’s phone then order: (see handbook for listing: #120 Acute Pain; #279 for Chronic Pain; #280 for Cancer Pain; #281 for Communicating Pain; #282 for Pain Medications; Excellence Every Day Pain Portal Page: http://www.mghpcs.org/eed_portal/EED_pain.asp

The MGH Center for Translational Pain Research: http://www.massgeneral.org/painresearch


MGH Palliative Care: http://www.massgeneral.org/palliativecare

MGH Formulary (includes patient teaching handouts in 16 languages): http://www.crline.org/crsql/servlet/crline

Intranet site for MGH use to locate pain assessment tools and policies: http://intranet.massgeneral.org/pcs/Pain/index.asp

**MGH Cares About Pain Relief**

Massachusetts General Hospital

PainRelief@partners.org  http://www.mghpcs.org/painrelief

To be added to or removed from the Pain Relief Connection mailing list, send an email to pamarnstein@partners.org