

PAIN RELIEF CONNECTION THE PAIN INFORMATION NEWSLETTER

Provided by MGH Cares About Pain Relief, a program of MGH Patient Care Services

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In the News

- President's Opioid Commission issues the [combatting addiction and the opioid crisis report](#) that includes updating the CDC guidelines.
- The impact [declaring the opioid epidemic a national public health emergency](#) has on the front lines addressing the crisis.
- [GAO asks CMS to monitor patients taking opioids & prescribers](#) of high opioid doses & payers to investigate high dose prescribers.
- CMS plans to [require old & disabled patients to get opioid prescriptions from selected prescribers & pharmacies](#). Comment [before 1/16/18](#)
- Congressman Latta (R-Ohio) introduced the [INFO Act to organize & evaluate impact of opioid laws](#) to halt the epidemic.
- Clinton Foundation report has [evidence-based recommendations on safe opioid prescribing](#) & better treating addiction.
- Pharmaceutical fentanyl remains schedule II, but [illicit-fentanyl analogues are schedule I](#) (like heroin) to help law enforcement.
- Despite a [push to take patients off opioids](#), doctors need to make professional decisions about what's best for specific patients.
- Massachusetts [opioid overdose deaths down 10%](#) as 30% few patients get opioids, but 80% fatalities remain from illicit fentanyl.
- [FDA warns about nutritional supplement kratom](#), being increasingly used as an alternative to opioids, and is linked to dozens of deaths.
- Proposed [bill would require non-VA prescribers to follow strict opioid limits](#) when treating veterans, and have prescriptions tracked by the VA
- [DEA raid on top pain doctor](#) Forrest Tennant's home for prescribing opioids & receiving consultation fees. [Colleagues & patients respond](#).

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

- Bernardes SF, Forgeron P, Fournier K, et al. Beyond solicitousness: a comprehensive review on informal [pain-related social support](#). *Pain*. 2017 Nov;158(11):2066-2076. Social support is important with distressing & disabling chronic pain. Although most research has focused on a narrow view of helpful distracting responses or maladaptive solicitous responses; many aspects of social support remain unexplored.
- Schenk LA, Krimmel SR, Colloca L. Observe to get pain relief: current evidence and potential mechanisms of [socially learned pain modulation](#). *Pain*. 2017 Nov;158(11):2077-81. How empathy, sharing vicarious experiences & other social factors shape the pain experience
- O'Donnell JK, Halpin J, Mattson CL, et al. [Deaths involving fentanyl, fentanyl analogs, and U-47700 - 10 States, July-December 2016](#). *MMWR*. 2017; 66(43):1197-1202. Most opioid fatalities are linked to illicit fentanyl with many also having additional illicit drugs in their system.
- Kampe S, Geismann B, Weinreich G, et al. The influence of anesthesia type, perioperative pain, and preoperative health status on chronic pain six months after thoracotomy-A prospective cohort study. *Pain Med*. 2017 Nov 1;18(11):2208-2213. Pre-existing chronic pain, or higher pain scores at rest during the first five postoperative days are [predictors of chronic post-thoracotomy pain](#) occurring in 40% of patients.
- Brown M, Farquhar-Smith P. Pain in cancer survivors; filling in the gaps. *Br J Anaesth*. 2017 Oct 1;119(4):723-736. Advances in cancer treatment may leave survivors with [new types of iatrogenic cancer pain syndromes](#) explored in this article.
- Fabritius ML, Strom C, Koyuncu S, et al. [Benefit and harm of pregabalin in acute pain](#) treatment: a systematic review with meta-analyses and trial sequential analyses. *Br J Anaesth*. 2017;119:775-791. Pregabalin may cut post-op morphine use slightly at a cost of more side effects.

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

- Chang AK, Bijur PE, Esses D, et al. Effect of a single dose of oral opioid and nonopioid analgesics on acute extremity pain in the Emergency Department: A randomized clinical trial. *JAMA*. 2017;318:1661-1667. Adult ED patients with acute arm or leg pain, responded similarly to [ibuprofen and acetaminophen compared with common weak opioid](#) in combination with acetaminophen.
- Shanthanna H, Gilron I, Rajarathinam M, et al. [Benefits and safety of gabapentinoids in chronic low back pain: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials](#). *PLoS Med*. 2017;14:e1002369. Gabapentin is ineffective and pregabalin has limited effectiveness compared to placebo (less effective than analgesics) for chronic low back pain; despite both having significant side effects.
- Brix LD, Bjørnholdt KT, Thillemann TM, et al. Pain-related [unscheduled contact with healthcare services after outpatient surgery](#). *Anaesthesia*. 2017 Jul;72(7):870-878. Within 2 months of surgery, 20% of patients make unscheduled contact with health care professionals, most frequently due to pain in the first postoperative week.
- Giummarra MJ, Casey SL, Devlin A, et al. Co-occurrence of [posttraumatic stress symptoms, pain, and disability](#) 12 months after traumatic injury. *PAIN Reports*: 2017; 2(5):e622. A third of patients develop PTSD a year after being hospitalized for traumatic injury. Those with pain are 3 times more likely to develop PTSD than those without pain. Other cognitive & affective contributors are described.
- Allen JD, Casavant MJ, Spiller HA, et al. [Prescription Opioid Exposures Among Children and Adolescents in the United States: 2000-2015](#). *Pediatrics*. 2017 Apr;139(4). Over 100,000 preschool kids had accidental exposure to opioids in a 5 year period; buprenorphine rates are up.
- Jackson LK, Imam SN, Braun UK. Opioids in cancer pain: Right or privilege? *J Oncol Pract*. 2017 Sep;13(9):e809-e814 Although opioids can be used in those with [both cancer pain and addiction](#), sometimes it's best to avoid opioids in those with a substance use disorder.

Pain Resources on the Web:

- Enteroendocrine cell lining the gut provide new insights into digestion, metabolism, immunity & [visceral pain](#)
- The [NIH Pain Consortium](#) and [Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee](#) websites have been updated.
- A [child's pain memories](#) can impact future experiences. Addressing memories and hands-on soothing can help lower or prevent future pain.
- Everything you wanted to know about [medical cannabis](#), from history, to chemistry to therapeutic products/options and more.

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

- What the evidence says about the safety and effectiveness of [Mind and Body Practices for Fibromyalgia](#)
- App informs patients about how the [mind-body connection affects the chronic pain experience](#) & can guide nondrug pain control methods.
- [Virtual Reality relieves a variety of pain conditions](#) as an adjunct to psychotherapy in 15-20 minutes/week sessions. (Flash player required)
- A [low FODMAP diet helps with IBS](#), but could also help with other disease states associated with [abdominal pain](#). (Free registration required)
- Research review shows [electrotherapy \(e.g. TENS\) or acupuncture are best at reducing opioid use](#) after knee replacement surgery.
- [Reducing vaccination pain in babies](#) by breast feeding or sucking sugar water is recommended & presented in 7 languages.

Pain-Related Education Opportunities

- Sun-Tue. Mar 4-6 American Pain Society 2018 Scientific Summit. [Understanding Pain Mechanisms](#) Anaheim, CA
- [17th World Congress on Pain®](#) is less than a year away in Boston. September 12 – 16, 2018 [Special registration rates](#) through 12/31/17

MGH Pain Calendar

- *Tools and Techniques for Effective Pain Management* – Tuesday, January 23, 2018 *Founders House 325 @ 8AM – 1PM* [Sign-up](#) here.
- Pain Rounds from Tufts U. are webcast live Wednesday morning from 8:00 AM – 9:00. email: [William Jackson](#) for more information.
- Palliative Care Grand Rounds are Wednesday mornings from 8AM – 9AM, Ether Dome. email: [Margaret Spinale](#) for more information.

MGH Pain Resources

The Patient Education Television: Dial 4-5212 from patient's phone then order: see handbook <http://handbook.partners.org/pages/168> 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 Pain Medicine: <http://www.massgeneral.org/centerforpainmedicine/>

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

MGH Formulary (includes patient teaching handouts in 16 languages): <http://www.crlonline.com/crlsql/servlet/crlonline>

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 [Paul Amstein](#)