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In the News

- Opioid overdoses disproportionately affect different populations; supporting a need for focused support & access to care.
- OxyContin-maker pleads guilty to 3 federal crimes with an $8 billion settlement forcing Purdue to become a public benefit company.
- Mallinckrodt files for bankruptcy over opioid crisis due to unmanageable legal liabilities, as stocks dip to under a dollar.
- Online salesman of fentanyl-laced counterfeit analgesics targeted patients who were unable to get opioid refills from their doctors.
- Dec. 11th the FDA will hold a workshop “Opioid Analgesics Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy” and are seeking public comments.
- Drug Takeback Day collected nearly a million pounds of unused/unwanted drugs, but it’s unclear how many opioids were returned.
- Recently approved opioid diceridine was assigned a Schedule II classification by the DEA, like other intravenous (IV) opioids.

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

- Varas V, Bertinelli P, Carrasco P. Intraoperative ketamine and magnesium therapy to control postoperative pain after abdominoplasty and/or liposuction: a clinical randomized trial. J Pain Res 2020 Nov (13): 2937—46. Co-administration of intraoperative ketamine plus magnesium cut pain & opioid use first 12 hours after surgery. No more side effects were observed in those getting study drugs vs. placebo.
- Montes A, Roca G, Statistics JC, et al. Presurgical risk model for chronic postsurgical pain based on six clinical predictors: a prospective external validation. Pain. 2020 Nov;161(11):2611-18. New model predicts which patients will develop chronic postsurgical pain with 70% accuracy, based on six factors including pain intensity, age, gender, obesity, emotional state (e.g. anxiety, depression) and substance use.
Journal Watch (continued)  [MGHers can obtain articles through the Treadwell home page]

- LeVoir A, Lee M, Fitzgibbon D, et al. Chronic opioid therapy in cancer survivors at a specialty oncology pain clinic: opioid dosing, efficacy and safety over five years of pain management. J Pain Symptom Manage. 2020 Nov 10:S0885-3924(20)30866-6. Of 180 patients on opioids for post-cancer treatment chronic pain; most had stable or lower doses over 5 years, with only 1 showing aberrant behavior or serious effects.

Pain Resources on the Web:
- Australian-based grassroots "Pain Revolution" has resources to change the understanding of pain how patients, professionals & researchers.
- November is Complex Regional Pain Syndrome month. Resources for physiotherapists can be very helpful to patients & professionals
- Dialog on the state of the science; does cannabis fit into pain practice? between a pharmacist and medical researcher.
- National Academy of Medicine Action Collaborative virtual symposium on Countering the U.S. Opioid Epidemic.

Complementary Integrative Health
- Meta-analysis shows moderate evidence that acupuncture &/or acupressure reduces cancer pain while reducing analgesic use.
- Evidence-based decision aid assists in choosing complementary and integrative approaches that reduce pain in children with cancer.
- Virtual Reality helps patients with chronic pain develop coping skills in a way that is highly engaging with a low side effect burden.
- New study examines disparities in race of the experience and relief of knee osteoarthritis with mindfulness and transcranial stimulation.
- Kinesio taping reduces shoulder pain, subluxation, & improves arm functioning and activities of daily living in patients with hemiplegia.
- Cryoneurolysis & percutaneous peripheral nerve stimulation are promising innovations to relieve acute pain for weeks without drugs.

Pain-Related Education Opportunities
- Wed-Fri Dec 9-11 Transforming Pain Science & Care in Challenging Times, 2pm to 6:15pm (virtual format) USASP Inaugural Meeting
- Neural Basis of Mind-Body Pain Therapies; how pain and its treatment effects the brain. Free CE
- Manipulating the Pain: Chiropractic and Other "Alternative" Treatments for Back Pain. Free CE
- Clinically Relevant Herb-Drug Interactions; Past, Present, and Future. Free CE

MGH Pain Calendar Virtual Rounds
- Palliative Care Grand Rounds are held Wednesdays from 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM. Contact: Gail Chin for more information
- MGH Inter-professional Pain Rounds First and third Wednesday of month from 12–1pm. Email Tina Toland for more info

MGH Pain Resources

- MGH Pain Management Center Newsletter: https://conta.cc/2Hk79qV
- The MGH Center for Translational Pain Research: https://www.massgeneral.org/TranslationalPainResearch/
- MGH Palliative Care: http://www.massgeneral.org/palliativecare
- MGH Formulary (includes patient teaching handouts in 16 languages): http://www.crlonline.com/crlsql/servlet/crlonline

MGH Cares About Pain Relief
Massachusetts General Hospital
Previous Newsletters

To be added to or removed from the Pain Relief Connection mailing list, or other inquiries, send an email to Paul Arnstein