



Alternatives to Opioids for Pain Management

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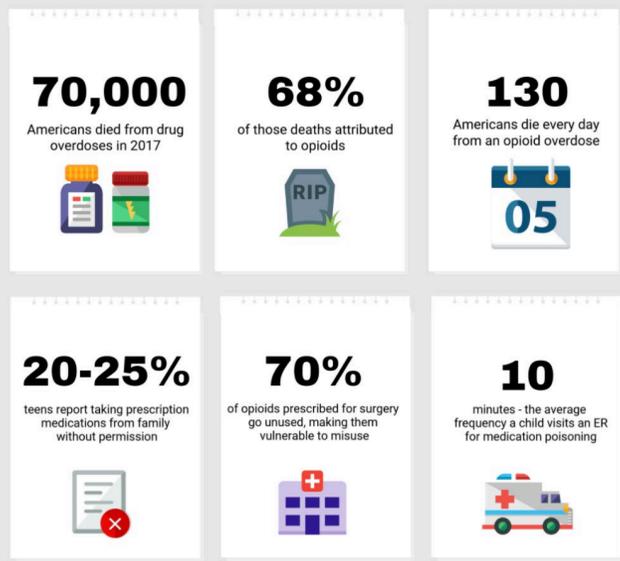
Introduction and Background

- Opioids are highly addictive, almost 15% of people who start taking opioids become addicted.
- The opioid crisis costs the U.S. over 78.5 billion dollars in healthcare systems.
- Opioid addiction can lead to clinical dependency and opioid induced debilitation.
- Finding solutions to prevent further misuse of opioid medication directly relates to the nursing profession, as nurses play a key role in promoting community health and advocating for the safety and well-being of patients who deal with chronic and/or acute pain disorders.

Purpose Statement & Research Question

- We researched postoperative patients who would typically undergo pharmacotherapy with opioids to alleviate their symptoms. We searched for interventions that would help reduce patient's pain using different forms of alternative pain management that do not include opioid medication.
- We compared the effectiveness and practicality of opioid therapy to that of other forms of pain management to better understand the ways that patients can work to reduce their pain symptoms in ways that do not include narcotic medication.

Opioid Facts and Figures



Findings

- Evidence supports the use of cannabis instead of opioids for chronic pain disorders and neuropathy that can result from undergoing surgical procedures (Vulfsons, S., Minerbi, A., & Sahar, T. 2020).
- The use of acupuncture lead to less pain for patients compared to the control group that underwent normal post-operative care plan for that facility using some form of opioid for pain management Li, H., Wang, B., & Chen, C. (2021).
- Patients following orthopedic surgeries were given a nonopioid pain regimen rather than opioids. The study found that the patients were able to recover with minimal rescue opioids and minimal discomfort in their recovery with no adverse side effects from the pain regimen. Moutzouros, V., Jildeh, T. R., Khalil, L. S., Schwartz, K., Hasan, L., Matar, R. N., & Okoroha, K. R. (2020).
- Patients given low dose steroids along slide of opioids reported less postoperative pain and less dependence on opioids for pain management Gardiner, D., McShane, B. J., Kerr, M., Agarwal, P., Saylany, A., Sharma, N., Joshi, D., Pierce, J., Pasao-Pham, N., Dante, S. J., Maloney-Wilensky, E., & Welch, W. C. (2020).

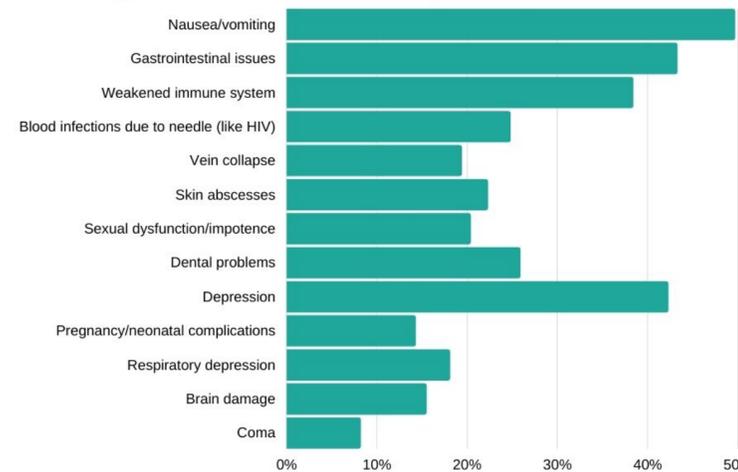
Literature Review

We used all scholarly peer reviewed journal article sources from CINAHL, PubMed, Google Scholar. Our initial search generated roughly thirty articles and we excluded any that were not published in the United States and involved children in their research studies. After we applied these criteria, we were left with sixteen articles. We found four articles about opioid alternatives and one on the history of the opioid crisis.

Conclusions and Nursing Implications

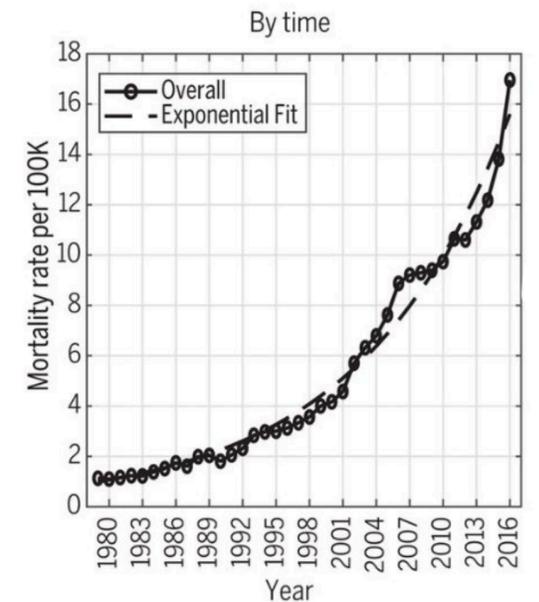
Our evidence supports alternative forms of treatment as a viable substitute to opioid medications, by implementing these treatments, patients may be able to reduce the number of opioids it takes to alleviate their pain, reducing their chances of developing side effects or overdosing. Nurse should be informed about these methods of alternative pain management in order to ensure that their clients are undergoing the best course of care possible.

Which health complications have you experienced related to your opioid use?



Source: therecoveryvillage.com

Overdose Mortality Rate



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