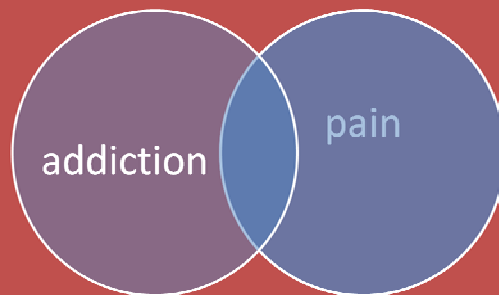


Treating Pain in the Patient with a History of Substance Abuse



Pain Treatment in Patients with or without and Addiction

- Is the distinction important?
- Current, recent or remote addiction
- Drug of choice?
- Acute vs. Chronic pain?

Pain Treatment in Patients with an Addiction

- These patients suffer thrice
 - From the painful disease
 - From the addiction which makes pain management difficult
 - From the health care providers ignorance

Pain Treatment in Patients with an Addiction

These patients are tough

- Demanding
- Dishonest
- Demeaning
- Denial
- Destitute

Acute Pain

- Consider non-pharmacologic therapies
- Consider non-opioid therapies
- If concern is post-surgical pain-can the procedure be delayed?
- Discuss your addiction concerns with the patient

Can addicts be treated with opiates?

Yes, but with caution

- Increase recovery activities
- Limited prescriptions
- Establish support system (family, friends, sponsor)
- Expect tolerance
- Remember non-opioid analgesics and non-pharmacological modalities

Chronic Pain

In general, when treating a patient with a history of substance abuse for chronic pain:

- Consider consulting a pain management specialist
- Try non-opioids, adjuvant analgesics and non-pharmacologic therapies first
- Chronic pain program

Chronic Pain

- Must consider
 - High tolerance to medications
 - Are opiates effective in this population?(limited data,hyperalgesia,cross-addiction)
 - Low pain threshold
 - High risk for relapse-due to the treatment itself or inadequate pain treatment

Chronic Pain

If opiates needed

- Avoid patients drug of choice
- Address the addiction concern
- Contract
- Consultation,refer if indicated
- Avoid self-administration

Chronic Pain

- Explain the potential for relapse
- Get family/support system involved
- Frequent follow-ups
- Treat medical/psychiatric co-morbidities
- Urine testing

Chronic Pain

Consider partial agonist medications with less abuse potential

- Buprenorphine

In Summary

- This is a difficult population to treat
- When in doubt
 - refer
 - consultation
- Use all non pharmacologic and non opiate modalities available
- Address the addiction