

## Tincture of opium prevents non-prescribed use of benzodiazepines among opium-dependent women: Potential applications for clinical practice

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**Introduction:** Tincture of Opium (TOP) is a newly approved maintenance therapy for opioid users in Iran but little is known about the therapeutic effectiveness of TOP in treating non-prescribed use of benzodiazepines.

**Methods:** We examined the therapeutic effectiveness of TOP among a community-recruited sample of women who were simultaneously dependent on opium smoking and non-prescribed use of benzodiazepines. Clients underwent 6 months of treatment with TOP and were followed for 6 months after treatment. Initial and monthly evaluations were conducted by completing Addiction Severity Index (ASI-5<sup>th</sup>) and collecting random urine specimens for each client.

**Results:** Among 283 clients, 221 completed the treatment. The mean age of the sample was 36 (SD=9.8) years. Duration of dependence on simultaneous use of opium with benzodiazepines was 5 (SD=8.7) years. 86% became abstinent from simultaneous use of opium and benzodiazepines after completing the treatment and 71% remained abstinent after 6 months of treatment. Attending psychotherapeutic meetings (adjusted odds ratio [AOR]=1.85, 95% CI=1.04-2.19), and family support for treatment (AOR=1.61, 95% CI=1.24-2.49) were associated with treatment success. Older age (AOR=1.94, 95% CI=1.12-3.20), being divorced (AOR=1.31, 95% CI=1.14-2.19), current psychiatric diagnosis with depression (AOR=1.84, 95% CI=1.12-3.20), and current conflicts with family (AOR= 0.39, 95% CI=0.28-0.66) were associated with failure in treatment.

**Conclusion:** TOP can prevent non-prescribed use of benzodiazepines among opium-dependent women in Iran but further studies are required to examine this issue.

### Biography

Zahra Alam Mehrjerdi is a Clinical Psychologist and a researcher working on therapeutic issues related to women and drug use at Iranian National Center for Addiction Studies (INCAS), Tehran University of Medical Sciences in Tehran, Iran since 2008. She has published 12 original, review and editorial papers and has also international oral and poster presentations on women and drug use at international conferences such as NIDA and CPDD annual meetings.

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