Pain and addiction: Mitigating risk

Chronic pain has a high prevalence, especially in the United States, and carries significant morbidity and health care costs. The adequate treatment of patients with chronic pain is the responsibility of all health care providers, regardless of specialty. Opioids have long been and continue to remain an important piece of that treatment, but their use has increased exponentially over the past 20 years and resulted in near-identical increases in the misuse of, abuse of, and addiction to these drugs. In this presentation, the author will review the history of the paradigm shift in opioid prescribing, the scope and extent of the resulting problems associated with that shift, and the evidence of efficacy and safety when chronic non-cancer pain is treated with prescription opioids. Recommendations are made to assess initial and ongoing risk, and monitor patients (who truly benefit), to help practitioners responsibly continue to prescribe opioids appropriately, while reducing misuse, abuse, and addiction.

Biography

William S Jacobs, MD, is board certified in Anesthesiology, Pain Medicine, and Addiction Medicine. A Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude University of Georgia undergraduate and graduate of the Medical College of Georgia, he did his Anesthesiology Residency at the University of Alabama-Birmingham before matriculating to UF for his Addiction Medicine Fellowship. He is currently Associate Professor in Psychiatry and Addiction Medicine: Co-Chief of Pain Medicine at the University of Florida. His work has included serving as Medical Director of multiple addiction treatment programs as well as expert witness work, consulting with state and federal agencies, authoring peer reviewed works and as on pharmacologic studies.

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