Prescription Drug Abuse

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April 09, 2013
Learning Objectives

- Identify common prescription drug abuse trends
- Identify the most commonly abused prescription drugs and drug seeking behaviors
- Be able to identify how and where to report suspected drug abuse
Prescription Drug Abuse

National Institutes of Health Definition

Prescription drug abuse is the intentional use of a medication without a prescription; in a way other than as prescribed; or for the experience or feeling it causes.
Background Information

- National Statistics
  - Prescription drug abuse is now considered to be the second leading cause of death
  - Considered a serious public health crisis
  - The fastest growing drug problem
  - Unintentional drug poisoning and overdose of opioids exceeds cocaine and heroin
  - Only second to motor vehicle deaths
  - Exceeds rates of suicide and homicide
Statistics

Unintentional Overdose Deaths Involving Opioid Analgesics, Cocaine, and Heroin
United States, 1999–2007

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Unintentional Drug Poisoning in the United States (July 2010).
Drug-Induced Deaths Second Only to Motor Vehicle Fatalities, 1999–2007

In 2007, there were 9.18 deaths per 100,000 population due to unintentional drug overdose, based on 27,658 deaths.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Unintentional Drug Poisoning in the United States (July 2010).
Statistics

- Prescription drugs are the 2nd most abused category of drugs in US after Marijuana

- 70% of people who use pain relievers for non-medical use got the drug from friends or relatives for free

- 18% reported getting the drug from one doctor

- 5% got them from a drug dealer

- <0.5% from the Internet
After Cannabis, Nonmedical use of Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medications Account for Most of the Commonly Abused Drugs in 12th Graders (*in the past year*)
Misused Medications

- Medications used to treat pain
  - OxyContin (oxycodone)
  - Vicodin (hydrocodone)

- Medications used for ADHD
  - Ritalin (methylphenidate)
  - Adderall (amphetamine/dextroamphetamine)

- Medications used to treat anxiety
  - Xanax (alprazolam)
  - Valium (diazepam)
Misused Medications

- Tramadol
  - Centrally acting analgesic for moderate to severe pain
  - Acts as an opioid
  - To control or not control?
  - Abuse potential
    - PIMC treats as a C-IV medication
    - State of AZ does not treat as a controlled medication
Prescription Drug Abuse Among Native Americans

- Not a lot of specific data available

- Native Americans and Caucasians are at a greater risk for overdosing on prescription pain medications

- 1 in 10 Native Americans report using prescription pain medications for non-medical purposes, compared to 1 in 20 Caucasians, and 1 in 30 African Americans

- CDC believes these numbers may actually be underestimation

- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vT8iA0rMUln](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vT8iA0rMUln)
Prescription Drug Abuse Among Native Americans

- Various abuse patterns among different reservations
  - Methamphetamines
  - Prescription pain medications
  - Marijuana

- In the news
  - 2011 Minnesota Public News Story
  - Minnesota’s two largest reservations, Red Lake and White Earth Ojibwe have declared prescription drug abuse to be public health emergencies
  - 2007 – 2008 number of people treated for prescription drug abuse on the reservations has doubled
Drug Seeking Behaviors

- Lost or stolen rx’s
- Self dose adjustments
- Doctor Shopping
- Forged prescriptions
- Frequent ER trips
- Multiple Pharmacies
- Fails to comply with treatment plans
Drug Seeking Behaviors

- Shows no interest in alternative therapies
- Terminates providers
- Unwilling to disclose medical history or information
- Avoids medical work-ups
Reversing and Managing this Troubling Trend

- Get prescription pain medications off the streets
  - Limit the day supply
    - 30 days vs 90 days
  - Drug take-back programs

- Pain Management agreements-Every Patient is at risk!
  - Sets expectations and goals
  - No refills or replacements
  - Pill counts and frequent visits

- Urine Drug Screenings-Random

- Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs
  - Varies state-to-state
Reversing and Managing this Troubling Trend

- Using the AZ Database
  - [https://azcspmp-ph.hidinc.com/](https://azcspmp-ph.hidinc.com/)
    - For pharmacists AND prescribers
    - Medications filled at PIMC are not reported
    - If suspect drug diversion or abuse ask for a search

- Not all states use the database system
  - Florida-OxyContin Express, No database
  - Montana-Just launched in 2013

- Responsible and Safe Prescribing

- Patient-Provider Communication
Reversing and Managing this Troubling Trend

- Refer patients to addiction experts
- Refer patients to pain experts
References


Discussion