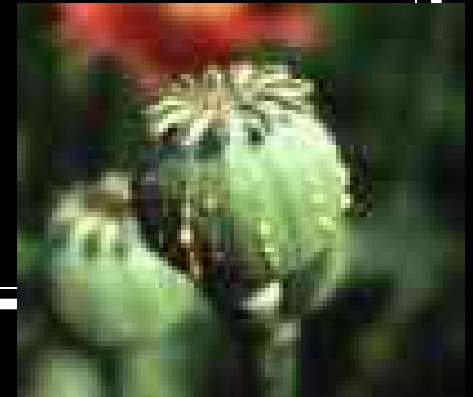


# Pain and Prescription Opioid Abuse

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Nathaniel Katz, MD, MS  
Tufts University School of Medicine  
Maine Conference  
November 17, 2006



# Key Points

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- Failure to balance the use of opioids for pain and their contribution to prescription opioid abuse has become a national crisis
- More precisely targeted opioid use is the only way forward
- Prescribers can implement a risk minimization strategy that will improve the treatment of pain while reducing these risks

# Pain is a Major Problem

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- 10% of US population has chronic moderate to severe pain
- Adding milder or recurrent pain raises estimate to 30-50 million in US
- Chronic pain is the major source of work disability in the industrialized world
- US cost over \$100 billion per year
- Impact on quality of life enormous

# Opioids Have a Role in Chronic Pain

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- WHO stepladder algorithm for cancer pain
- About 30 published placebo-controlled RCTs of opioids in chronic pain
  - All opioids tested work
  - All pain syndromes tested are relieved
- Case series show long-term safety and efficacy in a subgroup

# Prescription opioid abuse is a major problem...

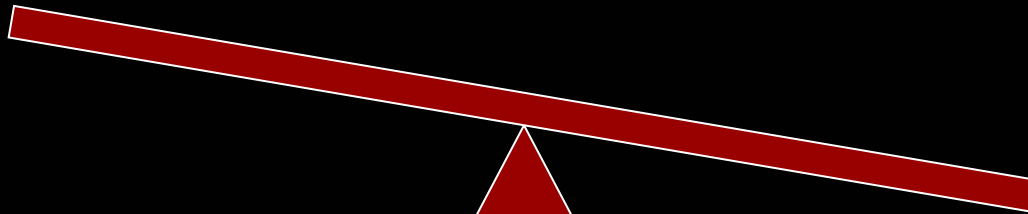
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- Minimum of 430 million doses ingested non-medically per year
- 1.5 million Americans meet criteria for abuse or addiction
- Second only to marijuana in addiction prevalence
- Leading illicit drug among new initiates to drug abuse, ahead of cigarettes
- Implicated in 1/3 of the 1.3 million adolescent suicides documented per year

# Risk Management Balance

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↑ Opioid Access



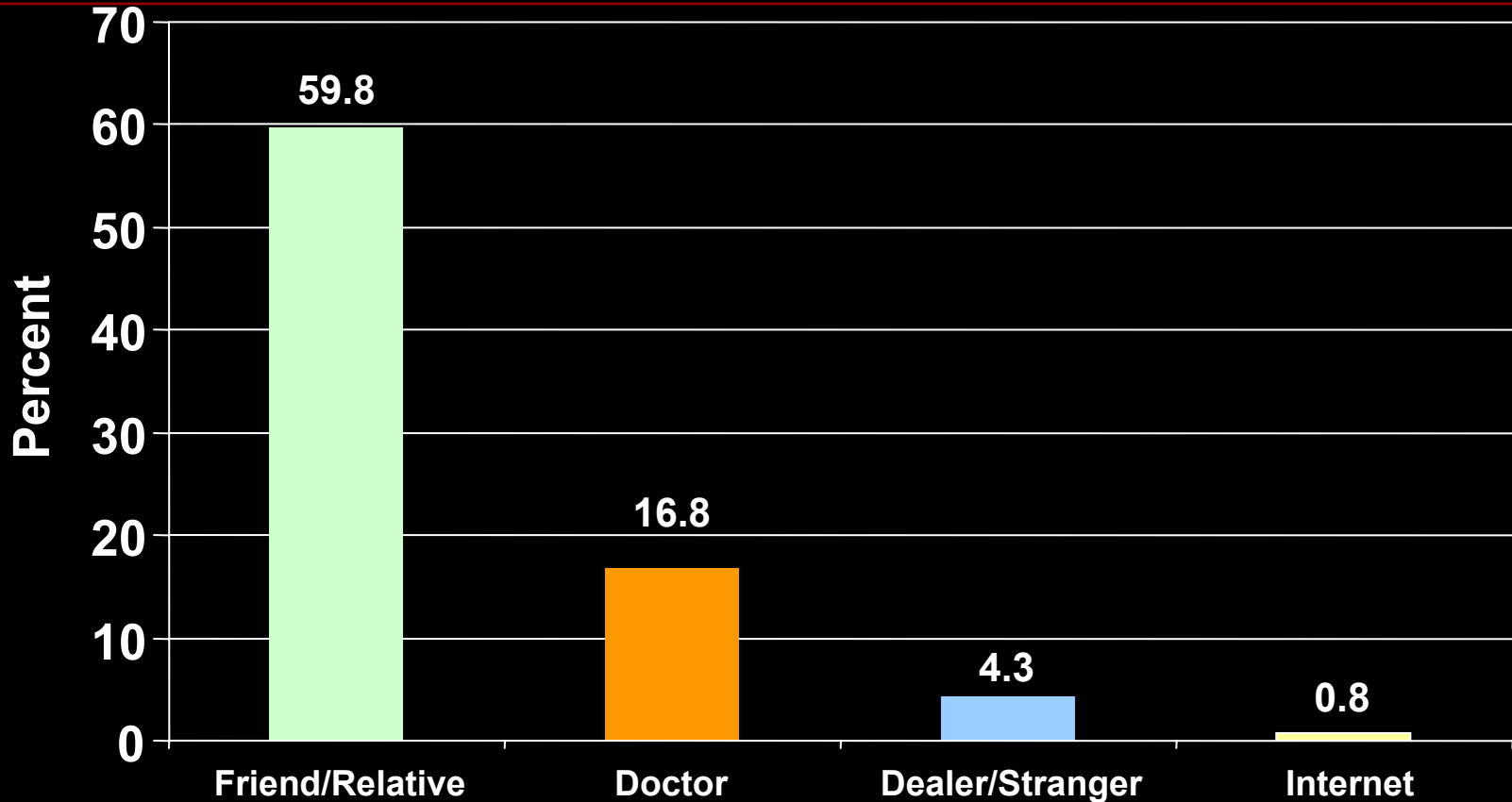
↓ Prescription  
Opioid Abuse

# Does Opioid Prescribing Drive Prescription Opioid Abuse?

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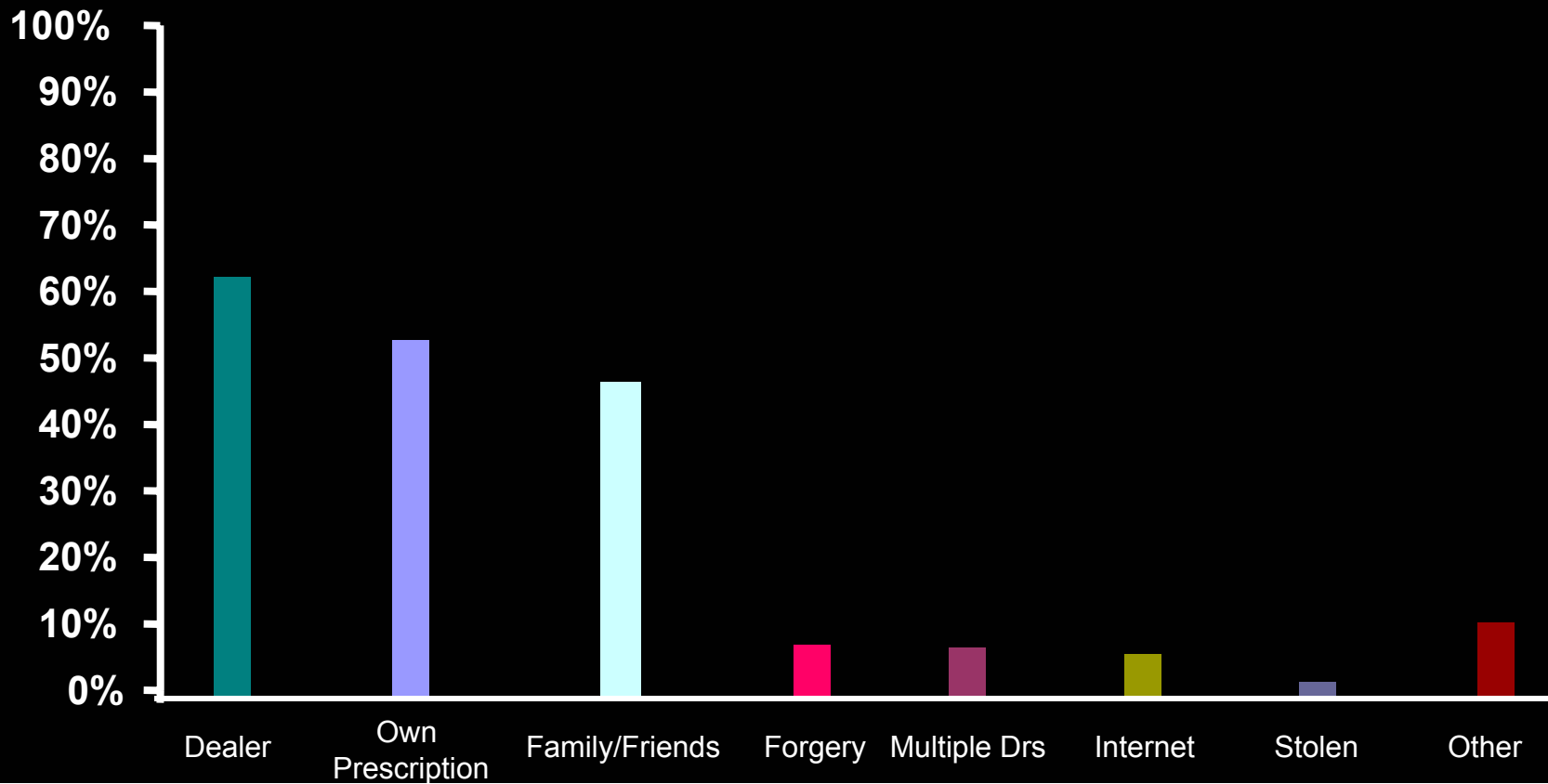
- 30-45% of prescription opioid abusers received their first opioid prescription from a doctor
  - A significant minority were not at apparent high risk prior to first exposure
- 20-40% of patients on long-term opioids for pain have co-morbid substance abuse problems
- Most prescription opioids diverted into the community come directly or indirectly from prescriptions

# Pain Relievers Obtained for Nonmedical Use: Sources Reported by Users\*

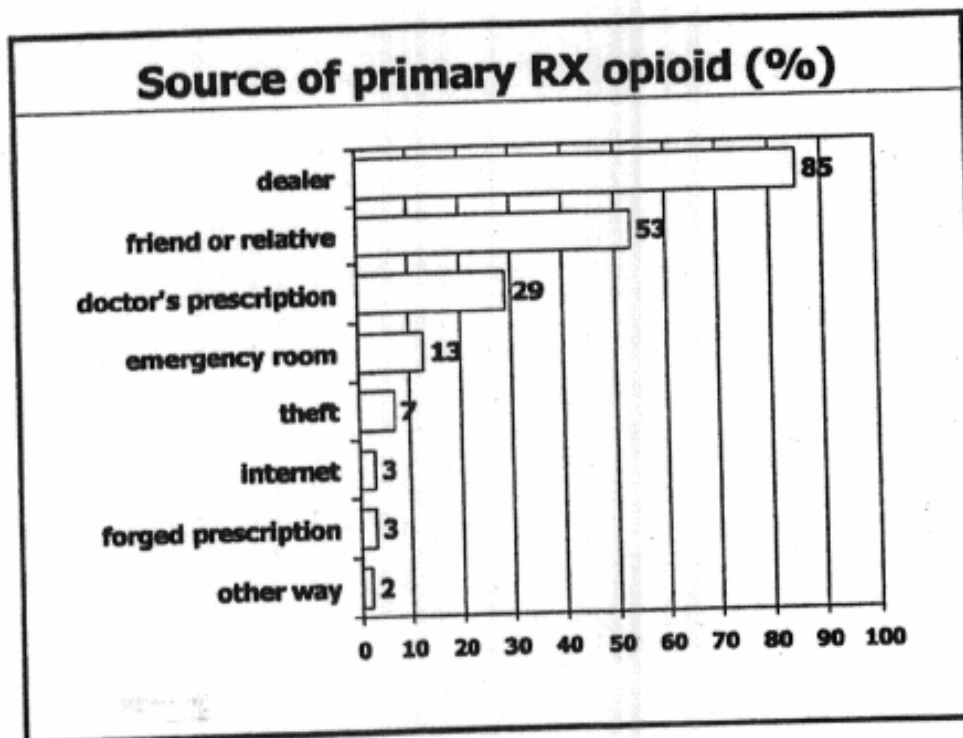


# Source of Diverted Prescription Drugs (NAVIPPRO)

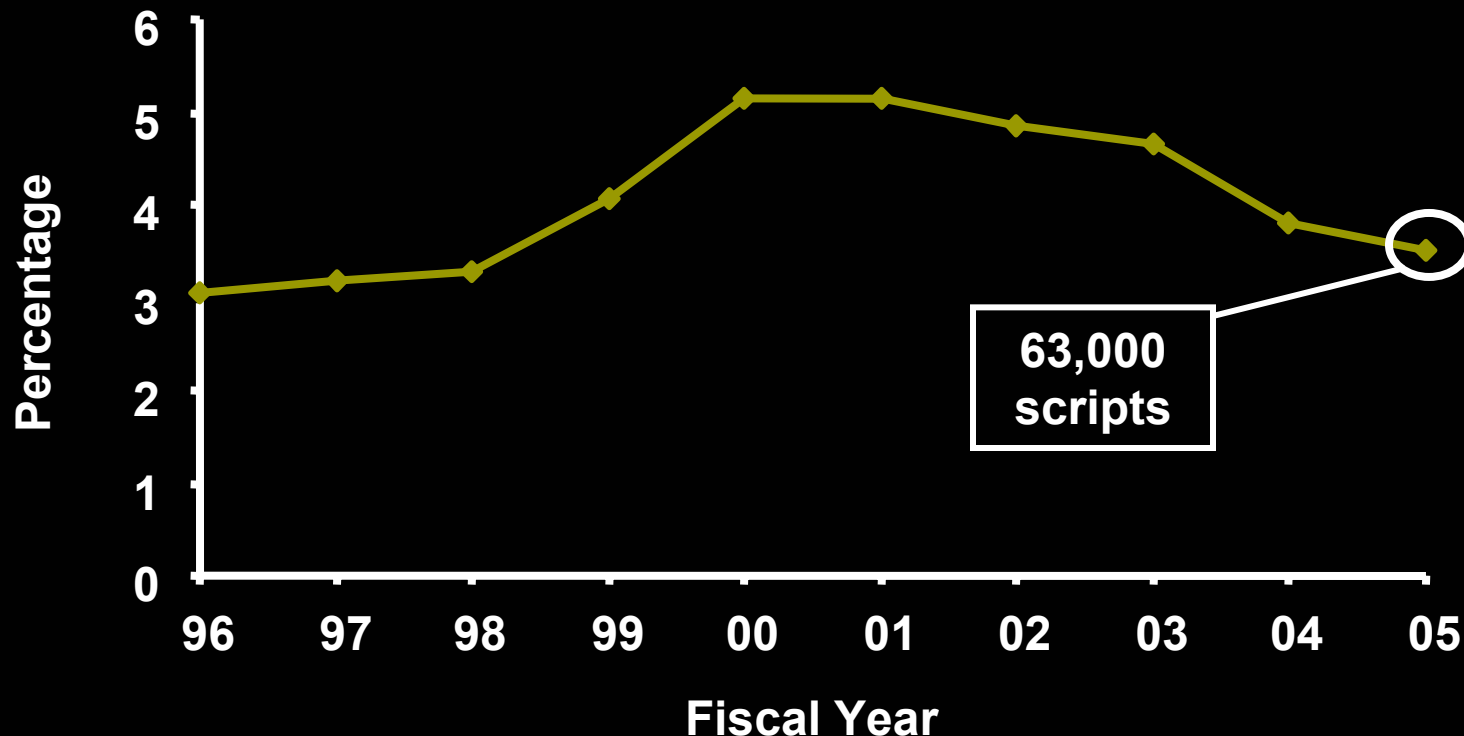
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# AATOD study



# Estimated Percentage of Schedule II Opioid Prescriptions Dispensed to Individuals Showing Questionable Activity\* by Fiscal Year



\*Questionable Activity = obtained Schedule II opioid prescriptions from  $\geq 4$  pharmacies and  $\geq 4$  physicians during the specified year

# Aberrant Behaviors vs Urine Toxicology Testing

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Urine Toxicology	Aberrant Behaviors		Total
	Yes	No	
Positive	10 (8%)	26 (21%)	36 (29%)
Negative	17 (14%)	69 (57%)	86 (71%)
Total	27 (22%)	95 (78%)	122

**53/122 (43%) of patients had “problems” (positive urine screen or behavioral issues)**

What can clinicians do to support pain relief while minimizing prescription opioid abuse?

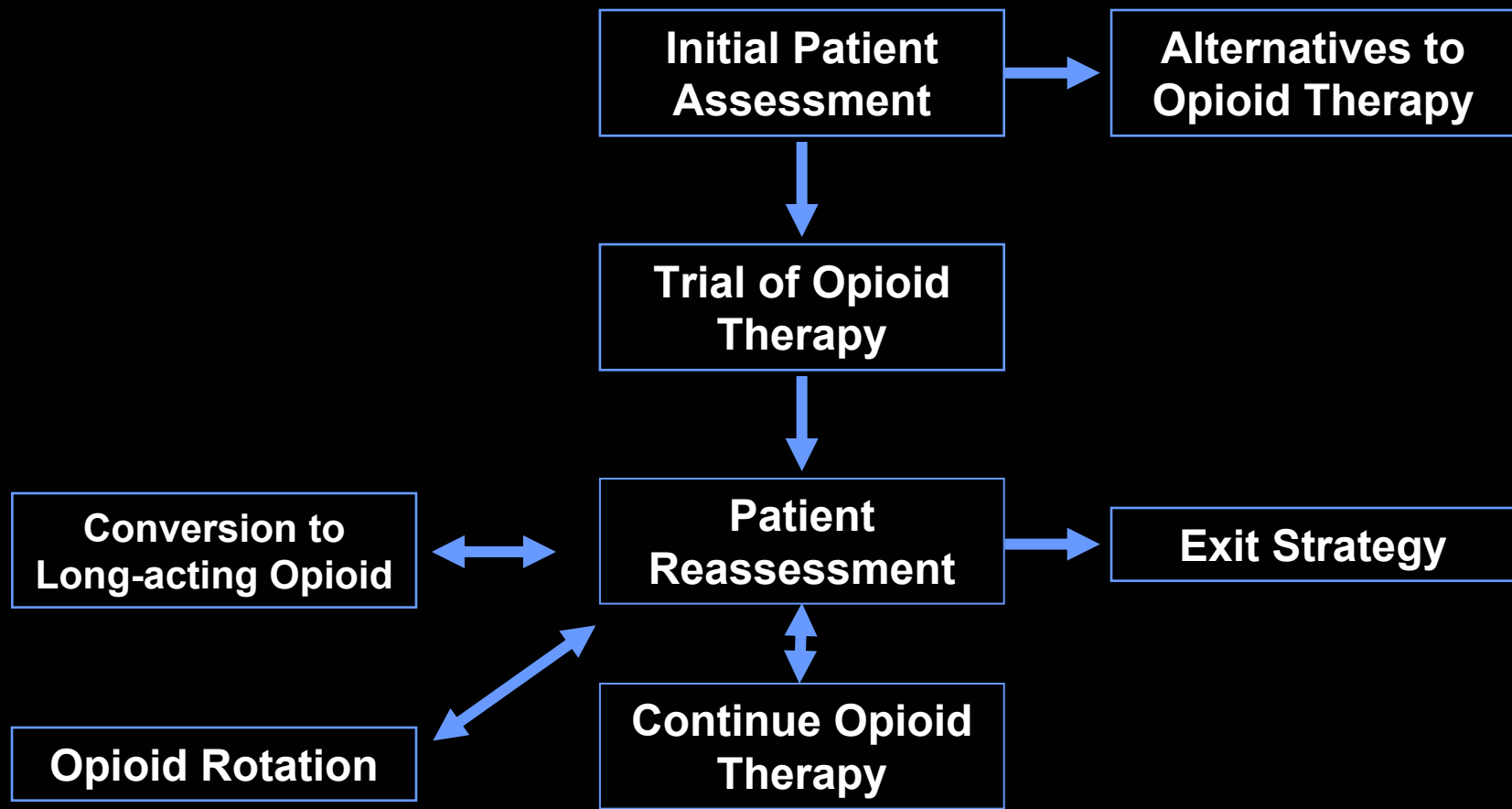
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# Steps to minimize abuse and diversion

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- Employ universal precautions
  - Documentation, urine toxicology
- Tamper patients from opioids who are not benefiting or persistently non-compliant
- Use prescription blanks with both copy- and tamper-resistant features and consider serialization
- Secure prescription pads as you would cash
- Review PMP data on all patients where available
- Put up a sign in your office summarizing office policy regarding opioid-related crimes
- Avoid prescribing opioids on the first visit
- Review outside medical records

# Algorithm for Opioid Treatment of Chronic Pain



# Initial Assessment for Opioid Therapy

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- Initial patient assessment tool
- Brief Pain Inventory – Short Form
- Mental Health Screening Tool
- Medical records
- Urine toxicology (other labs)
- Prescription monitoring data

# Initial Assessment: Triage

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<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Management</b>
Low	No history of substance abuse; minimal if any risk factors	Can be managed by PCP If aberrant behaviors are observed, consider increasing risk category
Medium	Past history of substance abuse (not prescription opioid abuse); significant risk factors Patient previously assigned to low risk exhibits aberrant behaviors	PCP co-manages with addiction and/or pain specialists If aberrant behaviors are observed or persist, consider assigning to high-risk category
High	Active substance abuse problem; history of prescription opioid abuse Patient previously assigned to medium risk exhibits aberrant behaviors	Opioids may not be appropriate Refer treatment to specialists in management of patients with co-morbid pain and addictive disorders Continue to manage patient's medical care including pain relief and monitor specialized care

# Initiation of Opioid Trial

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- Patient treatment agreement
- Patient education brochure
- Medication flow chart

# Follow-Up Visit

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- PADT
- Urine toxicology
- Pill counts
- Review medication flow chart

# Tapering patients off opioid therapy

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- How to identify non-responders
  - Persistent lack of pain relief
  - Persistent significant side effects
  - Persistent non-compliance
- How to get non-responders off opioids
  - Avoiding withdrawal
  - Managing pain during taper
  - Multidisciplinary approaches

# SOAPP<sup>®</sup> V.1 – 24Q

## SOAPP<sup>™</sup> Version 1.0

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*The following are some questions given to all patients at the Pain Management Center who are on or being considered for opioids for their pain. Please answer each question as honestly as possible. This information is for our records and will remain confidential. Your answers alone will not determine your treatment. Thank you.*

Please answer the questions below using the following scale:


**0 = Never, 1 = Seldom, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Very Often**

1. How often do you feel that your pain is "out of control?" 0 1 2 3 4
2. How often do you have mood swings? 0 1 2 3 4
3. How often do you do things that you later regret? 0 1 2 3 4
4. How often has your family been supportive and encouraging? 0 1 2 3 4
5. How often have others told you that you have a bad temper? 0 1 2 3 4
6. Compared with other people, how often have you been in a car accident? 0 1 2 3 4
7. How often do you smoke a cigarette within an hour after you wake up? 0 1 2 3 4
8. How often have you felt a need for higher doses of medication to treat your pain? 0 1 2 3 4
9. How often do you take more medication than you are supposed to? 0 1 2 3 4
10. How often have any of your family members, including parents and grandparents, had a problem with alcohol or drugs? 0 1 2 3 4
11. How often have any of your close friends had a problem with alcohol or drugs? 0 1 2 3 4


**0 = Never, 1 = Seldom, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Very Often**

12. How often have others suggested that you have a drug or alcohol problem? 0 1 2 3 4
13. How often have you attended an AA or NA meeting? 0 1 2 3 4
14. How often have you had a problem getting along with the doctors who prescribed your medications? 0 1 2 3 4
15. How often have you taken medication other than the way that it was prescribed? 0 1 2 3 4
16. How often have you been seen by a psychiatrist or a mental health counselor? 0 1 2 3 4
17. How often have you been treated for an alcohol or drug problem? 0 1 2 3 4
18. How often have your medications been lost or stolen? 0 1 2 3 4
19. How often have others expressed concern over your use of medication? 0 1 2 3 4
20. How often have you felt a craving for medication? 0 1 2 3 4
21. How often has more than one doctor prescribed pain medication for you at the same time? 0 1 2 3 4
22. How often have you been asked to give a urine screen for substance abuse? 0 1 2 3 4
23. How often have you used illegal drugs (for example, marijuana, cocaine, etc.) in the past five years? 0 1 2 3 4
24. How often, in your lifetime, have you had legal problems or been arrested? 0 1 2 3 4

*Please include any additional information you wish about the above answers. Thank you.*

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 • Phone (617) 332-6028 • Fax (617) 332-1820 • www.inflexion.com  
 The Screener and Opioid Assessment for Patients with Pain was developed with an unrestricted grant from Endo Pharmaceuticals Inc.



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# COMM

## COMM

Please answer each question as honestly as possible. Keep in mind that we are only asking about the past 30 days. There are no right or wrong answers. If you are unsure about how to answer the question, please give the best answer you can.

Please answer the questions using the following scale:

In the past 30 days:	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very often
	0	1	2	3	4
1. How often has more than one doctor prescribed pain medications for you at the same time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. How often have you experienced slurred speech?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. How often have you had trouble with thinking clearly or had memory problems?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. How often has your pain been so bad that you've had to use alcohol or other substances with your pain medication?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. How often have you used an illegal drug, such as pot, cocaine, ecstasy, etc.?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. How often do people complain that you are not completing necessary tasks? (i.e., doing things that need to be done, such as going to class, work or appointments)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. How often have you had to go to someone other than your prescribing physician to get sufficient pain relief? (i.e., another doctor, the Emergency Room, friends, street sources)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. How often have people complained that you don't pay attention?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. How often have you taken your medications differently than how they are prescribed?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please answer the questions using the following scale:

In the past 30 days:	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very often
	0	1	2	3	4
10. How often have you seriously thought about hurting yourself?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. How often have you seriously thought about hurting someone else?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. How much of your time was spent thinking about opioid medications (having enough, taking them, dosing schedule, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. How often did you drink alcohol?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. How often did you had five or more drinks at a time?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. How often have you been in an argument?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. How often have you had to exaggerate your pain, even a little, to get people to understand how much you hurt?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. How often have you had trouble controlling your anger (e.g., road rage, screaming, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. How often has your medication been lost or stolen?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. How often have you altered your medication in order to get a more powerful effect (snorting, injecting, etc.)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. How often have you gone to an appointment drunk or high?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. How often have you needed to take pain medications belonging to someone else?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# Clinician Use of PMP Data

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- Examine data on every patient on opioid therapy
- Identify patients meeting criteria for doctor shopping; triangulate with other data
- Collaborate with other physicians to identify a single prescriber and pharmacy
- Exit patient from opioids if appropriate
- Refer to addiction treatment if appropriate

# Discussion

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