

# Study Links Bigger Opioid Prescriptions to Prolonged Use After Surgery, Urging Better Prescribing Practices

PHILADELPHIA,, PA, UNITED STATES, July 24, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New research reveals a critical link between the size of initial opioid prescriptions and prolonged use after hand and upper extremity surgeries, underscoring the urgent need for safer prescribing practices. With 30% of patients requiring additional opioid prescriptions and 14% continuing use months after surgery, this study highlights the pivotal role surgeons play in combating the opioid crisis.

The study titled "Larger Perioperative Opioid Prescriptions Lead to Prolonged Opioid Use After Hand and Upper Extremity Surgery: A Multicenter Analysis" investigates the impact of surgeons' prescribing patterns on prolonged opioid use postoperatively. It was organized by the Rothman Opioid Foundation. The study found that patients who received larger initial opioid prescriptions were more likely to continue using more opioids and for longer after surgery.

"These findings could represent potentially modifiable risk factors for surgeons to help prevent the development of persistent opioid use in their patients after surgery by using smaller and more customized opioid prescriptions," according to Dr. Asif Ilyas, co-author of the study. He is President of The Rothman Opioid Foundation, a Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at Thomas Jefferson University, and an Associate Dean of Clinical Research at the Drexel University College of Medicine in Pennsylvania.

This multicenter retrospective study was conducted at three academic institutions across Philadelphia. It included patients who underwent hand and upper extremity surgeries. Opioid prescription data was obtained from the Pennsylvania Prescription Drug Monitoring Program website.

"We recommend surgeons adopt and use strategies that have been proven to decrease postoperative opioid use, including preoperative patient counseling, multimodal pain regimens, and opioids tailored to specific surgeries that avoid inadvertent over-prescribing," says Ilyas.

In addition to Ilyas, co-authors included Clay Townsend, Matthew Sherman, Dr. Hesham Abdelfattah, Dr. Ryan Judy, Dr. Justin Ly, Nick Elmer, Dr. Mark Solarz, Dr. Christine Conroy, and Dr. Katharine Criner-Woozley. The study appears in the Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Global Research and Reviews. It can be found at:

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36734644/>

About the Rothman Institute Foundation for Opioid Research and Education.

The Rothman Orthopaedic Foundation, for short, is a non-profit 501c3 organization dedicated to raising awareness of the ongoing opioid crisis, educating physicians and patients on safe opioid prescribing and use – respectively, and advising policymakers on sound opioid and pain management policy. Most importantly, the Rothman Opioid Foundation performs and supports the highest quality research on opioids and alternative pain modalities to yield findings that can better inform patients, physicians, and the greater healthcare community in the most evidenced-based pain management strategies while working to mitigate opioid abuse and addiction.

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