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In the News

● DEA will sponsor another National Rx Drug Take-Back Day Oct. 22, 2016 to disposing unwanted Rx drugs, while educating the public.
● Health & Human Services awards $53 million to help address opioid epidemic by improving access to treatment for overdose and addiction.
● US Surgeon General asks professions to pledge to Turn The Tide ending the opioid overdose epidemic by learning safe, effective pain control.
● Massachusetts sends prescribers a list of over 100 non-opioid medications, however, many are either for specific pains and/or for off-label use
● FDA approves a new radio frequency device for chronic low back pain that destroy basivertebral pain nerves within vertebrae that cause pain.
● The effect of opioid policy changes may have hurt pain patients, as prescriptions since 2012 dropped 15%, while overdose deaths climb.
● Virtual Reality to help cope with pain is increasingly being used at hospitals as the costs of hardware is down and patient acceptance is high.
● Many overdose deaths result from the combination of opioids and benzodiazepines, that FDA will highlight these risks in boxed warnings.
● Since 2012, a 15% cut in opioid prescriptions has paralleled a rise in opioid death rates, suggesting new laws may miss the mark.
● A fundraiser is focusing on pain research & opioid abuse as a Women’s Health issue. Your donation could help them win a million!
● In Massachusetts, 85% of opioid overdoses are from illicit heroin illicit fentanyl, with only 8% from a recent legitimate opioid prescription.
● Massachusetts Board of Nursing revised its Advisory Ruling on Pain Management to require APRN training related to opioid abuse & Narcan

Journal Watch [MGHers can obtain articles through the Treadwell home page]

● Sun EC, Darnall B, Baker LC, et al. Incidence of and risk factors for chronic opioid use among opioid-naive patients in the postoperative period. JAMA Intern Med. 2016 Sep 1;176(9):1286-93. On average <1% of surgical patients progress to chronic opioid use, with men, older age, and preoperative drug or alcohol abuse, and those with preoperative depression, benzodiazepine or antidepressant use at increased risk.
● Chambers J, Gleason RM, Kirsh KL, et al. An online survey of patients’ experiences since the rescheduling of hydrocodone: The first 100 days. Pain Med. 2016 Sep;17(9):1686-93. Regulations that reassigned hydrocodone to a Schedule II drug to curb abuse has resulted in less effective treatments, higher costs, missed work days, suicidal ideation and strained professional–patient relationships.

MGH Cares About Pain Relief
Massachusetts General Hospital
PainRelief@partners.org ● http://www.mghpcs.org/painrelief
To be added to or removed from the Pain Relief Connection mailing list, send an email to pmarnstein@partners.org
Pain Resources on the Web:

- Are your genes "primed" for chronic pain? Description of how genes and pain exposure transitions to chronic pain.
- A new film, Narcotica - Breaking Free fights the stigmatization & marginalization of people with pain with info about pain care problem.
- Build your Opioid IQ, that balances science, guidelines and clinical practice concerns about the appropriate place of opioids in pain therapy.
- The American Chronic Pain Association brief video on how life with chronic pain is like a car with 4 flat tires.
- The science is inconclusive, but points to small fiber and brain pathology in fibromyalgia as the underlying explanation of this disease.
- Animated TED Talk that describes how the brain responds to pain, and how knowledge of these mechanisms can be used to control pain.
- FDA issues a Medication Safety for Older Adults information sheet for you to print and distribute to older adults and their caretakers.

CIH (Complementary Integrative Health approaches; formerly called Complementary Alternative Medicine [CAM])

- Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy lowers pain intensity in women experiencing chronic post-breast cancer treatment pain.
- Research (50 years) on complementary approaches show acupuncture, yoga, massage & relaxation works for some pain types.
- Preliminary study shows a transient positive effect of Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation for Phantom Limb Pain
- A systematic review & meta-analysis of research on surgical patients shows massage alleviates pain & improves mood.

Pain-Related Education Opportunities

- Sat, Oct 8th Eastern Pain Society Annual Meeting in New York, NY Conference Agenda
- Wed, Oct 26th 8am – 4pm Check Mass Pain Initiative presents “Unintended Consequences of the Opioid Epidemic” Marlboro, MA

MGH Pain Calendar

- Tools and Techniques for Effective Pain Management – Tuesday, September 13th, 2016 Founders House 325 @ 8AM – 1PM Sign-up.
- Palliative Care Grand Rounds are Wednesday mornings from 8AM – 9AM, Ether Dome. email: Margaret Spinale for more information
- Chronic Pain Rounds in MGH Ether Dome. Email Tina Toland for details.

MGH Care About Pain Relief

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