



Opioid Therapy for Chronic Pain after TBI

What are the Opioid Prescription Patterns for Veterans with TBI and Pain?

Researchers looked at how opioids are prescribed for Veterans with TBI and chronic pain. Here are the main findings:

- ★ One in five Veterans diagnosed with TBI were prescribed short-term opioids for chronic pain in the first year they were seen, which is about the same for Veterans without TBI.
- ★ While only 3% of Veterans with TBI were prescribed long-term opioid therapy, 20% of these Veterans had not been tried on a non-opioid therapy first.
- ★ Veterans who were prescribed long-term opioids were likely to have PTSD, moderate-extreme pain, moderate-severe anxiety and moderate-severe sleep difficulties.
- ★ Every time a Veteran came to the hospital, there was a 1 in 10 increased chance of being prescribed short-term opioids and a nearly 2 in 10 increased chance of being prescribed long-term opioids.

Take Home: Veterans with or without TBI were more likely to be prescribed opioids for their pain in the first year they were seen in the VA.



For more information on CENC, visit:
<http://www.cencstudy.org>

Reference:

Seal, K.H., Bertenthal, D., Barnes, D.E., Byers, A.L, Gibson, C.J., Rife, T.L., Yaffe, K. (2018). Traumatic Brain Injury and Receipt of Prescription Opioid Therapy for Chronic Pain in Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans: Do Clinical Practice Guidelines Matter? *Journal of Pain*. Published online March, 28, 2018. Doi: 10.1016./j.jpain.2018.03.005