Pain Research in the News

UVA Slashes Opioid Use While Improving Patients’ Pain Scores, Study Finds
January 18, 2017 [Source: University of Virginia]
A study of more than 100,000 surgical cases at the UVA Health System found patients’ pain scores improved even as doctors gave fewer opioids. UVA anesthesiologists reviewed 101,484 surgeries between March 2011 and November 2015 where patients received general anesthesia.
Full story...

Blocking Neuron Signaling Pathway Could Lead to New Treatments for Peripheral Neuropathy
January 17, 2017 [Source: University of California San Diego School of Medicine]
Researchers at University of California San Diego School of Medicine, with colleagues at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, the University of Manitoba and St. Boniface Hospital Albrechtsen Research Centre in Canada, have identified a molecular signaling pathway that, when blocked, promotes sensory neuron growth and prevents or reverses peripheral neuropathy in cell and rodent models of type 1 and 2 diabetes, chemotherapy-induced neuropathy and HIV.
Full story...
Key Signaling Protein Associated with Addiction Controls the Actions of Oxycodone in Pain-Free and Chronic Pain States
January 17, 2017 [Source: Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai]
RGS9-2, a key signaling protein in the brain known to play a critical role in the development of addiction-related behaviors, acts as a positive modulator of oxycodone reward in both pain-free and chronic pain states, according to a study conducted at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and published online January 17 in the journal *Neuropsychopharmacology*. Full story...

Researchers Identify Source of Opioids’ Side Effects
January 16, 2017 [Source: Stanford University School of Medicine]
Stanford researchers said they have identified the receptors to which opioid drugs bind to produce tolerance and increased sensitivity to pain, as well as a commercially available drug that limited those side effects in mice. Full story...

Advocacy

AHRQ Key Questions on Noninvasive, Nonpharmacological Treatment of Chronic Pain
Comments from the American Academy of Pain Medicine (AAPM)
January 18, 2017 [Source: AAPM]
The Academy provided input to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) on proposed key questions for a systematic review on Non-invasive, Non-pharmacological Treatment of Chronic Pain. The purpose of this review is to assess the effectiveness and safety of non-pharmacological treatments for five chronic pain conditions – low back pain, neck pain, osteoarthritic, fibromyalgia, and tension type headache. AHRQ is expected to post its draft report publicly in approximately nine months, with an opportunity for comment. View AAPM comments...

AAPM Annual Meeting

33rd Annual Meeting Registration and Housing Available

Early-Bird Registration Ends Tomorrow, January 26
Register by the early-bird registration deadline, January 26, 2017, to secure the lowest meeting rates.

Plan to join the Academy in Orlando March 15-19 for the must-attend pain medicine meeting of the year. Reduced-price rates at the host resort, the Loews Sapphire Falls at Universal Orlando®, are available until February 10 on a first-come, first-served basis. View the full educational program, register, and book your hotel room.

Premier preconference and stand-alone programs, include:
Help Wanted:

**Interventional Pain Specialist**
Legacy Health
Portland, OR
Full time BE/BC Interventional Pain Specialist to provide services in the pain clinic.

**Outpatient Musculoskeletal/Sports Medicine Doctor Needed**
Princeton Spine and Joint Center
New Jersey
Searching for a full time doctor with a serious commitment to musculoskeletal medicine/sports medicine.

**Clinical Research Coordinator - Valparaiso, IN**
Buynak Clinical Research, P.C.
Valparaiso, IN
Seeking a full time Clinical Research Coordinator (experience preferred).

**Critical Care Anesthesiologist Needed in Charleston, SC**
The Medical University of South Carolina
Charleston, SC
Seeking Critical Care and Anesthesiology BE/BC eligible, fellowship training in critical care anesthesiology.

Contact AAPM with questions about the Annual Meeting by calling 847.375.4731 or email info@painmed.org. Connect with AAPM on social media using #PainMed2017.

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Substance Abuse and Addiction Research

**1.5 Million Adults Experiencing Serious Mental Illness Misused Opioids in the Past Year**
January 24, 2017 [Source: SAMHSA]
A new spotlight report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) indicates that in 2015 about 1.5 million adult Americans (ages 18 and older) who had experienced a serious mental illness in the past year had also misused an opioid during this period. The misuse of opioids includes any use of heroin and/or the misuse of opioid-based prescription pain relievers.

Full story...

Gene Variants May Help Personalize Treatment for Opioid Addiction
January 24, 2017 [Source: Yale University]
Yale researchers have discovered a genetic variant that may assist in personalizing treatment of opioid addiction. The results of their genome-wide association study were published Jan. 24 in the journal *Molecular Psychiatry*.

Full story...

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AAPM Position Statement

**For the Primary Care Provider: When to Refer to a Pain Specialist**
December 1, 2016 [Source: AAPM]
The American Academy of Pain Medicine’s (AAPM) Shared Interest Group in Primary Care provides a forum for pain specialists and primary care clinicians to gather and address clinical areas of concern for their patients. With the understanding that most chronic pain care takes place in conjunction with a patient’s primary care provider, the Primary Care SIG members have collaborated on the creation of a document meant to assist primary care providers in providing their patients the best of chronic pain care. A key aspect in providing that care is knowing when to refer to a pain specialist.

Full story...

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2017 AAPM Awards and Commendations

Please join the Academy in congratulating the following individuals and organizations who will be honored with an AAPM Award or Presidential Commendation during the 33rd AAPM Annual Meeting:

2017 Awards
Order the 2017 Illustrated Coding and Billing Expert for Anesthesia / Pain Management

Prepare your practice for 2017 by ordering the 2017 Coding for Pain book. This book is an all-in-one resource containing the coding information needed for the anesthesia/pain medicine specialty. Optimized for medical necessity and reimbursement understanding, this guide focuses on a subset of CPT® anesthesia services, as well as surgeries, medicine, and ancillary services CPT® codes chosen by experts who take into consideration utilization, denial risk, and complexity.

Order Now
What Should Trump Look for in a New CDC Director?
January 12, 2017 [Source: The Hill]
AAPM Past President (2013) Lynn R. Webster, MD comments in an opinion piece in The Hill.
Full story...

A 'Civil War' Over Painkillers Rips Apart the Medical Community — and Leaves Patients in Fear
January 17, 2017 [Source: STAT]
AAPM President Daniel B. Carr, MD and AAPM Past President (2014) Sean Mackey,
MD, PhD are interviewed in this STAT article.

Grant Opportunities

Comparison of Surgical and Nonsurgical Options for Management of Chronic Nonspecific Low Back Pain - Cycle 1 2017
November 2016 [Source: Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)]
This notice encourages research institutions or consortiums of institutions with expertise in clinical comparative effectiveness research (CER)/patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR) and in clinical research related to chronic nonspecific low back pain to consider applying for this PCORI Funding Announcement (PFA).

Pain Abstracts in the News

Synergistic Regulation of Serotonin and Opioid Signaling Contributes to Pain Insensitivity in Nav1.7 Knockout Mice
January 10, 2017 [Source: Science Signaling]
Abstract: Genetic loss of the voltage-gated sodium channel Nav1.7 (Nav1.7-/-) results in lifelong insensitivity to pain in mice and humans. One underlying cause is an increase in the production of endogenous opioids in sensory neurons.

Impact of the Opioid Safety Initiative on Opioid-Related Prescribing in Veterans
January 4, 2017 [Source: PAIN]
Abstract: The Veterans Healthcare Administration (VHA) designed the Opioid Safety Initiative (OSI) to help decrease opioid prescribing practices associated with adverse outcomes. Key components included disseminating a dashboard tool that aggregates electronic medical record data to audit real-time opioid-related prescribing and identifying a clinical leader at each facility to implement the tool and promote safer prescribing.

Structural Plasticity and Reorganisation in Chronic Pain
December 15, 2017 [Source: Nature Reviews Neuroscience]
Abstract: Chronic pain is not simply a temporal continuum of acute pain. Studies on functional plasticity in neural circuits of pain have provided mechanistic insights and linked various modulatory factors to a change in perception and behaviour. However, plasticity also occurs in the context of structural remodelling and reorganisation of synapses, cells and circuits, potentially contributing to the long-term nature of chronic pain.

Pain as a Predictor of Opioid Use Disorder in a Nationally Representative Sample
December 2016 [Source: The American Journal of Psychiatry]
Abstract: Objective: The authors sought to ascertain the relationship between...
moderate and more severe pain and prescription opioid use disorders in the noninstitutionalized U.S. population.

Read more...

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PubMed Pain Abstracts

The following abstracts are posted at PubMed.gov:

**Small-Molecule Inhibition of STOML3 Oligomerization Reverses Pathological Mechanical Hypersensitivity**


Abstract: The skin is equipped with specialized mechanoceptors that allow the perception of the slightest brush. Indeed, some mechanoreceptors can detect even nanometer-scale movements. Movement is transformed into electrical signals via the gating of mechanically activated ion channels at sensory endings in the skin.

PMID: 27941788 DOI: 10.1038/nn.4454 [PubMed - as supplied by publisher]

Read more...

**Yoga Treatment for Chronic Non-Specific Low Back Pain**


Abstract: BACKGROUND: Non-specific low back pain is a common, potentially disabling condition usually treated with self-care and non-prescription medication. For chronic low back pain, current guidelines state that exercise therapy may be beneficial. Yoga is a mind-body exercise sometimes used for non-specific low back pain. AUTHORS' CONCLUSIONS: There is low- to moderate-certainty evidence that yoga compared to non-exercise controls results in small to moderate improvements in back-related function at three and six months.

PMID: 28076926 DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD010671.pub2 [PubMed - as supplied by publisher]

Read more...

**Incident and Long-Term Opioid Therapy among Patients with Psychiatric Conditions and Medications: a National Study of Commercial Health Care Claims**


Quinn PD, Hur K, Chang Z, Krebs EE, Bair MJ, Scott EL, Rickert ME, Gibbons RD, Kroenke K, D'Onofrio BM.

Abstract: There is growing evidence that opioid prescribing in the United States follows a pattern in which patients who are at the highest risk of adverse outcomes from opioids are more likely to receive long-term opioid therapy.


Read more...

**The Polyanalgesic Consensus Conference (PACC): Recommendations for Trialing of Intrathecal Drug Delivery Infusion Therapy**


Abstract: INTRODUCTION: Intrathecal (IT) drug infusion is an appropriate and necessary tool in the algorithm to treat refractory cancer and noncancer pain. The decision-making steps/methodology for selecting appropriate patients for implanted targeted drug delivery systems is controversial and complicated. Therefore, a consensus on best practices for determining appropriate use of IT drug infusion may involve testing/trialing this therapy
before implantation. CONCLUSION: The PACC provides consensus guidance on best practices of trialing for IDDS implants. In addition, the PACC recommends that no trial may be required in certain patient populations.

Leukocyte Opioid Receptors Mediate Analgesia via Ca(2+)-Regulated Release of Opioid Peptides


Abstract: Opioids are the most powerful analgesics. As pain is driven by sensory transmission and opioid receptors couple to inhibitory G proteins, according to the classical concept, opioids alleviate pain by activating receptors on neurons and blocking the release of excitatory mediators (e.g., substance P). Here we show that analgesia can be mediated by opioid receptors in immune cells. We propose that activation of leukocyte opioid receptors leads to the secretion of opioid peptides Met-enkephalin, ß-endorphin and dynorphin A (1-17), which subsequently act at local neuronal receptors, to relieve pain.

Teva Receives FDA Approval for VANTRELATM ER (Hydrocodone Bitartrate) Extended-Release Tablets [CII] Formulated with Proprietary Abuse Deterrence Technology

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