



Article of the Month

July 2018

Efficacy, tolerability and acceptability of oxycodone for cancer-related pain in adults: an updated Cochrane systematic review

Mia Schmidt-Hansen, Michael I Bennett, Stephanie Arnold, Nathan Bromham, Jennifer S Hilgart
BMJ Supportive and Palliative Care June 2018

This updated Cochrane systematic review looked at 23 RCTs using Oxycodone for cancer -related pain. Meta-analyses showed no significant difference between controlled release and immediate release in pain intensity or adverse effects.

Meta-analysis of the adverse events found a significantly lower risk of hallucinations than with morphine with no other differences, but the studies used were of low quality, so the authors suggest interpreting this finding with caution.

Other studies comparing Oxycodone with other opioids showed no clear superiority or inferiority in either pain relief or adverse events. The results lead the authors to suggest that Oxycodone can be used as a first line alternative to Morphine but as Morphine remains cheaper, Morphine remains the first line opioid of choice.

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Impact of specialist palliative care on coping with Parkinson's disease: patients and carers

Nathan J Badger, Dorothy Frizelle, Debi Adams, Miriam J Johnson
BMJ Supportive and Palliative Care June 2018

This short report describes a qualitative study looking at whether and how, access to specialist palliative care (SPC) services affected patients' and carers' coping with Parkinsons Disease (PD).

Three patients and five carers had semi-structured interviews and identified a number of Parkinsons' related stressors. The interviewers identified three themes about how palliative care services affected the participant's coping with PD: Managing uncertainty, impacts on self; and SPC maintaining a positive outlook.

The authors suggest that SPC acknowledged death and the complex, holistic nature of PD suggesting that SPC helps patients and carers cope with some effects of the disease and supports increased consideration of palliative need and provision for this neglected group.

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Prepared by Dr Helen McGee, on behalf of the APM Science Committee