

## **MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGHS** **RESEARCH SUMMARY**

TOPIC: OPIOID-FREE PAIN RELIEF: MMA  
REPORT: MB #4795

**BACKGROUND:** Opioid addiction includes prescription pain relievers, heroin, and synthetic opioids such as fentanyl. It is a national crisis that affects public health as well as social and economic welfare. Just under 30 percent of patients prescribed opioids for chronic pain misuse them, and about 12 percent develop an opioid use disorder. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that the total of prescription opioid misuse alone in the United States is \$78.5 billion a year. This includes costs of healthcare, lost productivity, addiction treatment, and criminal justice involvement.

(Source: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/opioids/opioid-overdose-crisis>)

**WHY ADDICTION AND HOW TO AVOID IT:** Opioids make your brain and body believe you need the drug for survival. As your body begins to tolerate the dose you're taking, you then feel you need even more medication to relieve the pain, which can lead to dependency. Addiction takes hold of our brains in many ways and is far more complex and less forgiving than people realize. A few signs of addiction may be spending time alone and avoiding time with family and friends; being very tired and sad; sleeping at odd hours; or experiencing financial hardship. It is vital to talk to a physician anesthesiologist or pain medicine specialist about using them safely and exploring alternative options. Learn to work with your physician to use opioids more wisely and safely and explore any pain management alternatives that might work for you.

(Source: <https://www.asahq.org/whensecondscount/pain-management/opioid-treatment/opioid-abuse/>)

**SUCCESS WITH MULTIMODAL ANALGESIA:** Multimodal analgesia is the use of several classes of analgesics with varying mechanisms of action combined to improve pain control, decrease dependency on opioids, and reduce side effects associated with each class. Consistency and standardization are important when implementing a multimodal analgesia pathway for a particular surgery. Standardization based on evidence allows for the largest number of patients to receive the best treatments available. The need for effective alternatives to opioids has never been greater than now, in the current health care situation. A study found that the risk for taking opioids chronically was increased in surgical patients compared with those not undergoing surgery.

(Source: <https://www.anesthesiologynews.com/Review-Articles/Article/10-19/Multimodal-Analgesia-The-Foundation-of-a-Successful-Perioperative-Experience/56171?sub=657C4D13807ED3293D92B4AB63250B0D773C3BAFAC62F568FD1918F7529EFB5>)

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**If this story or any other Ivanhoe story has impacted your life or prompted you or someone you know to seek or change treatments, please let us know by contacting Marjorie Bekaert Thomas at [mthomas@ivanhoe.com](mailto:mthomas@ivanhoe.com)**