

Pain Relief Connection

The Pain Information Newsletter

Provided by MGH Cares About Pain Relief,
a program of Patient Care Services

Archived issues are available at <http://www.MassGeneral.org/PainRelief>



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BEGINNING OUR 6th YEAR!

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In this issue:

In the News	Page 1	Pain Resources on the Web	Page 2
Pain & Addictive Illness	Page 1	Pain-Related Education Opportunities	Page 2
Patient Resources	Page 1	MGH Pain Calendar	Page 2
Journal Watch	Page 1		

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In the News

- Selected presentations of the weekly Palliative Care Grand Rounds are now available via streaming video on the [Palliative Care Service](#) web site.
- The [MGH Pain Resources](#) page, which formerly “lived” on the [Patient Care Services](#) web site, has moved to the [PainRelief](#) web site. From the PCS home page, click on Clinical Resources, then Pain Resources.
- In November 2006 the FDA issued an alert about potential toxicity of methadone. These toxicities are usually the result of improper management and/or patient failure to follow instructions. The new [package insert](#) (full prescribing information) and [patient information insert](#) are now available.

Pain & Addictive Illness

- “[Patient level opioid risk management](#)” by Nathaniel Katz, MD, MS is a supplement to the *PainEDU.org Manual*. [PainEDU.org](#)* is a web site with resources for both professionals and patients. Free registration is required to download the manual or supplement.

Patient Resources

- A new web site that encourages active patient participation in pain management has been launched. [PainACTION.org](#)* is particularly applicable to people with persistent pain.

Journal Watch ([M] = full text free access on MGH computers; [O] = open access; [R] = free registration required)

Did you know that MGHers can obtain articles from journals to which Treadwell Library does not subscribe? From the [Treadwell home page](#), go to Library Services, then Copying/Borrowing.

- Green CR. [The Quality of Cancer Pain Management for Racial and Ethnic Minority Americans: Unequal Burdens and Unheard Voices](#). *Journal of Cancer Pain & Symptom Palliation*. 2006(2);1:19-27. This paper is a review of the many factors that contribute to racial disparity in cancer related pain and its treatment, and a call to action to address them in regards to clinical and social research, communication, and access.
- Kalauokalani D, et al. [Can Patient Coaching Reduce Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Cancer Pain Control? Secondary Analysis of a Randomized Controlled Trial](#). *Pain Medicine*. 2007 Jan/Feb;8(1):17-24. An individually focused coaching session that addressed patient-clinician communication, self care, and patient misconceptions eliminated the pain severity disparity between white and minority cancer patients.
- Martell BA, et al. [Systematic review: opioid treatment for chronic back pain: prevalence, efficacy, and association with addiction](#). *Annals of Internal Medicine*. [M] 2007 Jan 16;146(2):116-27. This article has received a lot of attention in both the lay press and other professional journals. It doesn't tell us much that we

*Disclosure: Tom Quinn, Editor of *Pain Relief Connection*, has provided writing services to Inflexxion, Inc., the developer of PainEDU.org & PainACTION.org.

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didn't already know: opioids are marginally better than placebo or non-opioid analgesics when used for a few months; there is a significant incidence of "aberrant" drug-related behaviors among people with chronic back pain taking prescription opioid analgesics. We still don't know much about long-term use in those for whom aberrant behaviors are not an issue and who seem to derive benefit. It also doesn't tell us the place of opioids in comprehensive (i.e., multimodality) treatment of chronic back pain. And what is "chronic back pain?"

- Pasero C, et al. IV [Opioid Range Orders for Acute Pain Management: An effective protocol respects nurses' judgment and addresses patients' needs](#). *American Journal of Nursing* [M] Feb 2007;107(2):52-59. (includes CNE). How analgesic range orders are properly written by prescribers and managed by nurses and pharmacists has been controversial the past few years. This article provides much needed structure to the discussion and practical guidance for institutions and individual clinicians.
- Bennetto L, et al. [Trigeminal neuralgia and its management](#). *BMJ* [M] 27 Jan 2007; 334(7586):201-2005. Trigeminal neuralgia is rarely addressed in major general medical journals. This review helps to fill that gap.

Pain Resources on the Web

Both of the products below will be reviewed in next month's issue.

- The [Hopkins Opioid Program](#) offers a free opioid conversion calculator for download to a PDA (reviewed in *Pain Relief Connection* Vol 3 #1, Jan 2004). There is now a free web version available for use on desktop computers.
- A new free PDA opioid conversion calculator is available for Palm OS & Pocket PC PDAs from [ebm2go.com](#).

Pain-Related Education Opportunities

- Feb 2 – 4 (Fri – Sun) [New England Pain Association](#) (NEPA) [Annual Meeting](#), Woodstock, VT
- Mar 5 – 6 (M – T) [Pain, Opioids, and Addiction: An Urgent Problem for Doctors and Patients](#). NIH, Bethesda, MD. No registration fee. [Register online](#). Registration deadline: Feb 20.
- Mar 14 (Wed) "Complementary Therapies: Integrating Selected Therapies Into Plans of Care." Massachusetts Pain Initiative Spring Meeting. Mary Jane Ott, MN, MA, APRN, BC, RYT of DFCI and Don Freeman, Sturbridge Publick House, 8-noon, cost is \$20. Contact Amy Goldstein amy.goldstein@cancer.org, 508-270-4653
- Jun 7 – 8 (Thu – Fri) [The Art & Science of Palliative Nursing](#). Newton Marriott. Course Directors: Connie Dahlin of MGH & Maureen Lynch of DFCI.
- Jun 20 – 24 (Wed – Sun) [Principles and Practice of Pain Medicine](#). Harvard Medical School Continuing Education
- The [EPEC](#) (Education in Palliative and End-of-Life Care) curriculum has been revised and is available online. There are 3 pain-related modules available for \$30 each and awarding 1 CME for each. <http://epec.net/EPEC/webpages/index.cfm>
- [Master of Science in Pain Research, Education, and Policy](#), and [Certificate of Advanced Study in Pain Topics](#); Tufts University Medical School. An interdisciplinary postgraduate program. For info call 617-636-8541 or e-mail jconnolly@tufts-NEMC.org. (<http://www.tufts.edu/med/prep/>)

MGH Pain Calendar

- Mar 15 – 16 (Thu – Fri) [Pain Relief Champions Course](#). Click this link for updated information!
- **Chronic Pain Rounds are held Mondays at 12:00N in the Cox 8 Conference Room.**
 - Feb 5: Pancreatic Cancer, Carlos Fernandez-del Castillo, M.D.,
- **Palliative Care Grand Rounds are held Wednesdays at 8:00am in the Ether Dome.** Contact nalawless@partners.org for topics

MGH Pain Resources:

PainRelief web site: <http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/>

Previous issues of *Pain Relief Connection*: http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Newsletter/mghpain_connection.htm

Previous Pain Topics articles: http://www.massgeneral.org/painrelief/Pain%20Topics/mghpain_paintopics_index.htm

Patient Care Services Pain Resource Center: http://www.massgeneral.org/pcs/Secure/Clinical_Resources/Pain_Resources.asp

CCPD educational offerings: http://www.massgeneral.org/pcs/CCPD/Educational_Offerings/cpd_offerings_calendar.asp

Treadwell Library (Magic): <http://magic.mgh.harvard.edu/>

MGH Formulary (includes patient teaching handouts in 16 languages): <http://www.crlonline.com/crlsql/servlet/crlonline>

Partners Handbook: <http://is.partners.org/handbook/>

Primary Care Office InSite (PCOI) (Clinician and patient information): http://oi.mgh.harvard.edu/pcoi/frontpage_frames.asp

MESAC intranet site: <http://intranet.massgeneral.org/mesac/index.htm>

MGH Safety reporting System: <http://safety.massgeneral.org/>

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