

291

OPIOID USE IN YOUNG VETERANS (B2), Phipson Wu, Noelle Hasson. VA Palo Alto Health Care System, Palo Alto, CA (Phipson.Wu2@va.gov) IRB approval received.

Evidence suggests a dramatic increase in prescription opioid abuse in recent years, particularly in young individuals and those with psychiatric issues. Although veterans of the Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) era represent a group with these risk factors for opioid abuse, clinical data regarding the use of opioid analgesics in this population is limited. The objectives of the study are to a) determine the incidence of opioid use; b) describe the prescribing patterns of opioid analgesics; and c) evaluate the safety and effectiveness (30% pain reduction in 1 to 3 months) of chronic opioid therapy in young veterans. This is a retrospective study based on prescription data, data from the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 21 data warehouse and electronic chart review. Patients between the ages of 18 to 30 years receiving chronic opioid therapy (defined as having greater than or equal to a 90 day supply of opioids over a four month period) during the study (1/1/03 to 10/1/08) are included in the descriptive portion of the study. A subset of these patients who are on long acting opioids for at least six months are included in the effectiveness and safety analysis. The evaluation of prescribing patterns includes: median/mean dosages, number of agents and prescribers, prescriber specialties, presence of drug screenings, presence of pain contracts, and documentation of patient education. Results will be discussed.

