

Acute conditions where opiates may be used

Steven R. Brown, MD, FAAFP

Family Medicine

University of Arizona - Phoenix

Acute conditions where opiates may be used

- Musculoskeletal pain, non-fracture
 - Ankle sprain
 - Knee injury, including ligamentous
 - Low back pain, non-specific
 - Neck strain (may be related to motor vehicle accident)
- Musculoskeletal pain, fracture
 - Including osteoporotic vertebral fracture in older persons
- Severe headache including migraine
- Dental pain
- Nephrolithiasis
- Shingles/zoster
- Acute chest syndrome or vaso-occlusive pain crisis in sickle cell
- Post-partum perineal pain
- Biliary colic
- Acute coronary syndrome (inpatient)
- Flares in pain associated with chronic rheumatologic conditions

Acute conditions where opiates may be used

- Caveats

- Very hard to have good evidence base
 - Pain from many of these conditions is self-limited so improvement with medication may be difficult to study in an RCT
- Factors related to improvement in pain after injury or surgery are not well understood.
 - Likely unrelated to medication
 - Likely to involve social determinants of health
- Harm of incident long term opiate misuse may outweigh benefit of opiates in self-limited conditions
 - Many patients hospitalized for opioid dependence started using the drug to treat pain
(Canfield et al, *J Addict Med* 2010;4(2):108)