

DISCLOSURES

- **No Disclosures**

OPIOID“ADDICTION”in CANCER PATIENTS

Prevention & Management

Declan Walsh MD

**DEPARTMENT OF SUPPORTIVE ONCOLOGY
LEVINE CANCER INSTITUTE
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA USA**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

“A certain surgeon always took some opium, and gave of it likewise to his patient, when he had any considerable operation to perform.”

A Treatise on Opium, George Young, London, 1753

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Populations

- Opioids in - Addicts, Past Addicts
- Opioids in - Cancer Pain
- Opioids in - Chronic Pain
- Opioids in - Postoperative (+/- Cancer) Pain
- Opioids in - “Volunteers”

Beecher, Measurement of Subjective Responses, 1959

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Definitions

Drug	Abnormality
Addiction/Abuse	Psychological
Dependence	Physical
Tolerance	↓ Effect ↑ Dose

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioid Use Disorder (DSM-V)

Criteria

- 1. Larger Amounts**
- 2. Failed Discontinuation**
- 3. Craving**
- 4. Impaired Function**
- 5. Tolerance**
- 6. Withdrawal**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioid Use Disorder

- 1. Brain Circuit Functional Changes**
- 2. Neurotransmitters: Reward
Self-Control
Stress**
- 3. Changes Persist Long After Drug Use**
- 4. Multi-Substance; Serious Adverse Events**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome

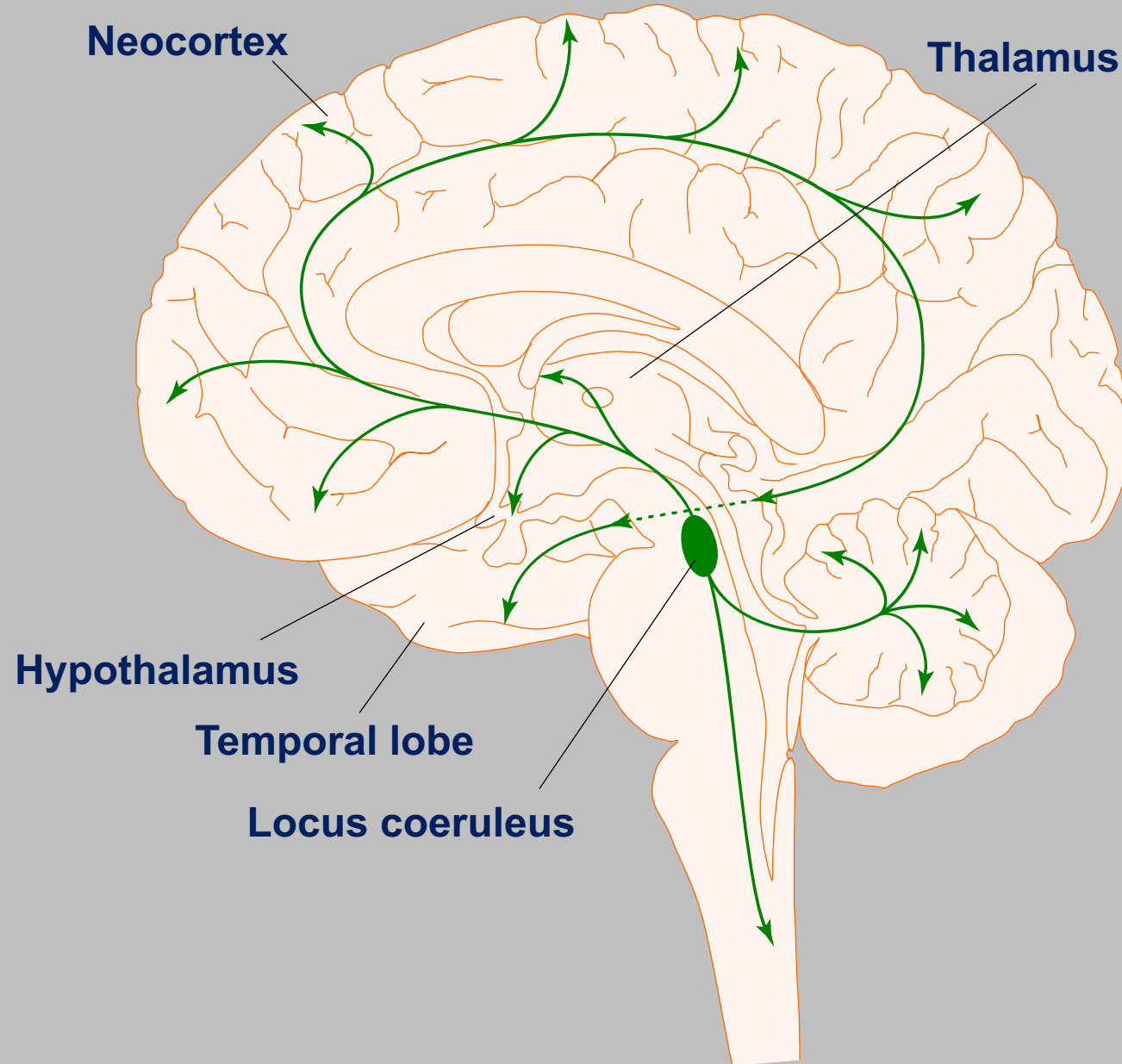
- **Tolerant / Dependent → Stop/Reduce Dose**
- **Flu-Like Syndrome**
- **Variable Presentation/Intensity**
- **Implies Physical Dependence – Not “Addiction”**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome

GI	Cramps, Diarrhea, Vomiting
Neuro	Anxiety, Irritable, Restless, Yawning
Systemic	Chills, Gooseflesh, Sweats/Fever
ENT	Runny Eyes/Nose, Dilated Pupils

NOREPINEPHRINE SYSTEM



OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Important Drugs

Drug	Receptor	Action
Buprenorphine	Mu Kappa	Partial Agonist Antagonist
Lofexidine	Alpha 2a	Agonist
Methadone	Mu NMDA	Agonist Antagonist
Naloxone	Mu, Delta, Kappa	Antagonist
Naltrexone	Mu, Delta, Kappa	Antagonist

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Complications

- **Alcohol**
- **Benzodiazepines**
- **Cannabinoids**
- **Nicotine**
- **Co-Morbidities**
- **Drug Interactions**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioid Prescribing Errors & Pseudo-Addiction

Patients (n)	Errors (n)	Strategy	Switch/Rotate	Adjuvant	Titration	Other
All (82)	151	78%	3%	3%	9%	7%
Pain ≥ 4 (62)	117	76%	3%	3%	10%	8%

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Clinical Scenarios

- 1. New Cancer Diagnosis + Pain + Prior Addiction**
- 2. Current (Prior) Cancer Diagnosis + Opioid Use Disorder**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Center for Disease Control & Prevention

- **Guidelines: Opioids for Chronic Pain (2016)**
- **Non-Mandatory Guidance for Primary Care**
- **Intended for Opioid Naive**
- **Blanket Limits; Mandatory Policy**

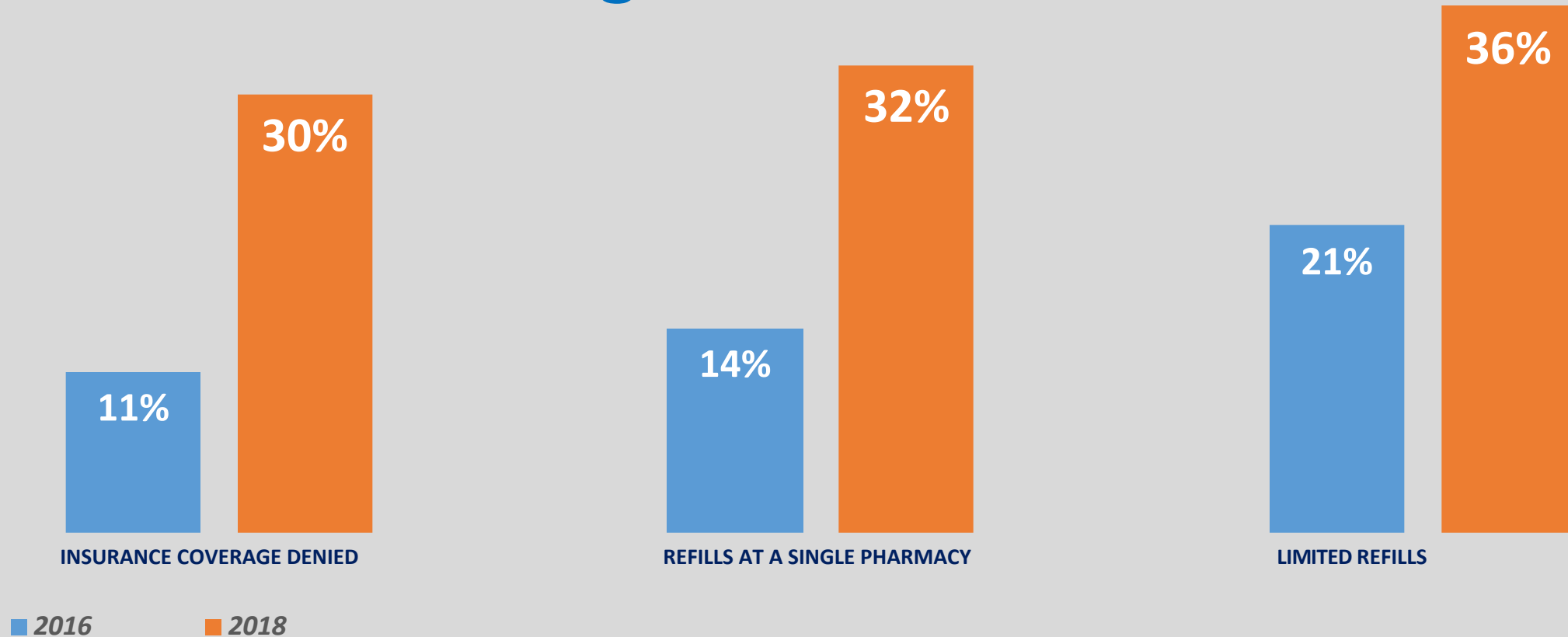
OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Unintended Consequences

- **Dose Limits**
- **Forced Tapers**
- **Insurance Denials**
- **Patient Abandonment**
- **Red Flags**
- **Supply Limits**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

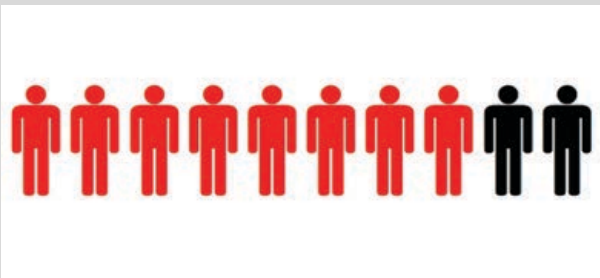
Growing Barriers To Access



OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioids Frequently Needed To Effectively Manage Cancer Pain

8 Out of 10



Patients with advanced cancer have moderate to severe pain ¹

Experience Chronic Cancer-Related Pain ²

Patients

55 %

Survivors

40 %



Use Opioids to Manage Pain ³

Patients

43 %

Survivors

10 %

1. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/side-effects/pain/pain-hppdq>
2. Update on Prevalence of Pain in Patients With Cancer JPSM
3. ACS CAN & PQLC Opioid Access Research Project June 2018

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Principles of Opioid Use in Cancer Pain

1. Individualized Dose Titration
2. Regular + Rescue Dosing
3. Switch (Route)
4. Rotate (Drug)
5. Equianalgesic Doses
6. Anticipate S/E
7. Adjuvant Analgesics

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

ASCO Principles for Drug Access

1. **Cancer Patients = Special Population**
2. **No Arbitrary Prescriptions Limits**
3. **Patient/Professional Education**
4. **Opioid-Related Disorders Treatment**
5. **Naloxone Access**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioid Abuse/Addiction Screening in Cancer

1. **Drug Monitoring Programs**
2. **Pain Contracts**
3. **Screening Tools**
4. **Support Services**
5. **Urine Drug Tests**



Patel, BMJSPC, 2019

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Screener	Population Validation	Items	High risk	Sensitivity	Specificity	Outcome Measure
COMM ¹²	227 chronic (non-cancer)	17	≥ 9	0.77	0.68	Aberrant drug behavior index, urine toxicology
ORT ¹⁴	185 chronic pain (non-cancer)	5	≥ 8	c statistic male = 0.82 c statistic female = 0.85		Aberrant drug behavior
SOAPP-R ¹⁸	223 chronic pain (non-cancer)	24	≥ 18	0.81	0.68	Self-report, toxicology screens, physician report

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Overdose Deaths

1. Overdose Death ; Opioid Prescribing 
2. Polydrug/Alcohol Abuse
3. Deaths: Fentanyl/Heroin 50%
 Cocaine/Methamphetamine 30%
 Prescription Opioids *
4. * Not Under Medical Supervision

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Chronic Pain in Adult Cancer Survivors

- 1. Screening + Comprehensive Assessment**
- 2. Treatment + Care Options**
 - a. Non Pharmacological**
 - b. Pharmacological**
- 3. Risk Assessment/Mitigation: Universal Precautions**

Paice, JCO, 2016

Opioid “Addiction” in Cancer

Summary

- 1. Learning the Wrong Lessons**
- 2. Opioid Use Disorder**
- 3. Pseudo-Addiction & Bad Prescribing**
- 4. Cancer Patients = Special Population**
- 5. Regulatory Barriers**
- 6. Important Drugs**
- 7. Opioids In Survivors**
- 8. Non-Pharmacological Management**

THANK YOU

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioid Overdose

- **47,600 Opioid Related Deaths 2017**
 - **Absolute**
 - **Relative**
- **Role of Naloxone**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Chronic Pain Syndromes with Cancer Treatment

1. **Chemotherapy**
2. **Peripheral Neuropathy**
3. **Hormonal**
4. **Arthralgias**
5. **Graft v Host**
6. **Paresthesia**
7. **Surgical**
8. **Post-Thoracotomy**

Paice, JCO, 2016

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Frequent Errors (N=177)

Patients	(%)	Total Errors
Any	70	151
1	38	45
2	18	42
3	8	27
≥3	6	37

Shaheen, JPMS, 2010

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioid Dosing Errors in Cancer Pain

- 1. Dose - Strategy**
- 2. Dose - Titration**
- 3. Dose - Conversion**

Kocchar, Oncology, 2003

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Important Drugs

- **Buprenorphine**
- **Lofexidine**
- **Methadone**
- **Naloxone**
- **Naltrexone**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioid Prescription Barriers

40 %

trouble filling opioid prescriptions



OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Terminological Confusion

- 1. Addiction**
- 2. Dependence**
- 3. Tolerance**
- 4. Withdrawal**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Outline

1. **The Opioid Epidemic**
2. **The Wrong Lessons**
3. **Terminological Confusion**
4. **Opioid Use Disorder**
5. **Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome**
6. **The Baby & the Bath Water**
7. **Prudent Practice**
8. **Survivors**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

- **Opioid Use Disorder**
- **Opioid Withdrawal Syndrome**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Opioid Use Disorder (DSM-V)

- **Problematic Pattern Of Opioid Use**
- **Clinically Significant Impairment or Distress**

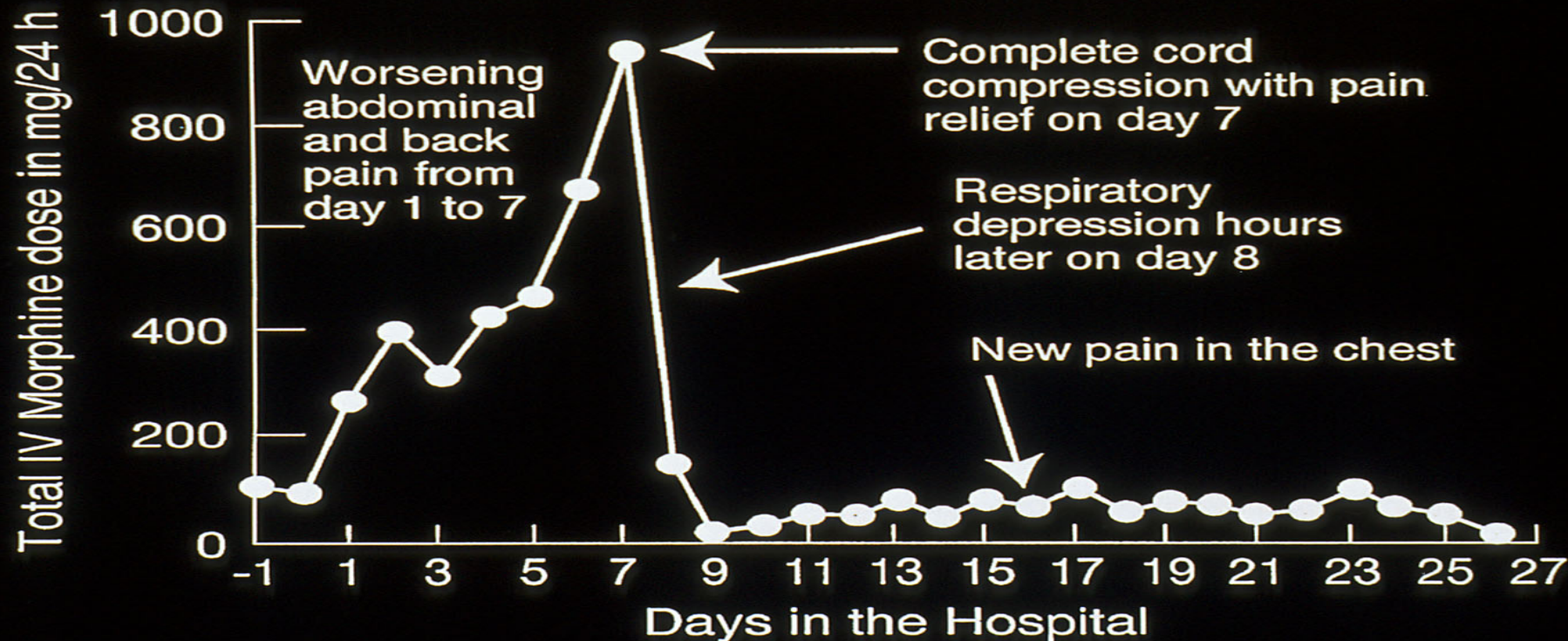
Opioids in Cancer

Interventions

- **Integrative Treatments**
- **Interventional Management**
- **Neurostimulatory Therapies**
- **Physical Medicine + Rehabilitation**
- **Psychological Approaches**

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

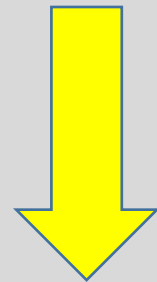
DAILY DOSES OF PARENTERAL MORPHINE IN MILLIGRAMS PER 24 HOURS



OPIOIDS IN CANCER

The Opioid Epidemic

The Response



Opiophobia

OPIOIDS IN CANCER

Pseudo-Addiction

Ineffective Pain Management



Drug Seeking Behavior