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## Opioid therapy for chronic non-cancer pain: Barriers in Egypt

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Opioid therapy for non-cancer pain is the first line treatment in acute and postsurgical pain. Opioids are used in many situations in palliative care. Now it is widely used for chronic non-cancer pain. Trained qualified physician with updated knowledge for opioids indications, abuse and assessing risk is a must to prescribe opioids. Patient selection is very important as opioids are used for moderate to severe pain that has adverse impact on function or quality of life and potential therapeutic benefits outweigh potential harms. Informed consent is a mandatory with all details for use of opioids as a trial for treatment with goals, expectations, potential risks and alternatives to opioid therapy. Patients of chronic opioids therapy should be monitored periodically and as warranted by changing circumstances. Monitoring includes drug screening, frequent visits, single pharmacy, pill counting and urinal screening for abuse detection. Opioids in our country are highly restricted to cancer pain and only available in cancer centers. So it is very difficult under these regulations to prescribe opioids for chronic non-cancer pain. Egyptian Ministry of Health should change policies for delivery of opioids for chronic pain patients. Pain physicians are trying to change Egyptian guidelines for opioids prescription by raising the issue through national pain societies and WHO office in Egypt.

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