
Educational Resources for Patients: Chronic Pain Medication and Treatment

People with chronic pain can certainly benefit from being well informed about their treatments and especially about the medications being prescribed. However, with the growing concern over long-term opioid use for chronic pain, patients can become overwhelmed and confused about information they receive from their physicians, pharmacists, and especially on the Internet. The *American Chronic Pain Association* (ACPA) (www.theacpa.org) points out that however hopeful the individual may be and however well-meaning the treatment may be, the reality is that there are risks associated with almost any treatment for chronic pain. The ACPA states "A successful person with chronic pain is someone who has learned to independently self-manage their condition in such a way as to achieve maximum function for everyday life activities while minimizing discomfort and avoiding a bad outcome from treatment."

One of the most comprehensive guides to chronic pain medication and treatment written in lay terms specifically for individuals with chronic pain can be found on the ACPA website. The *ACPA Resource Guide to Chronic Pain Medication and Treatment, 2013 Edition*, is an unbiased consensus document that combines an evidence-based medicine approach with practical clinic experience and the most recent scientific information. The ACPA Resource Guide can be downloaded for free at <http://www.theacpa.org/Consumer-Guide>. Although this guide is written more for individuals experiencing chronic pain, it can be an excellent resource tool for case managers and claims professionals as well.

Another recently published document also written for individuals experiencing chronic pain is called "If Opioids Have Not Relieved Your Chronic Pain" by Webility. The link to this brochure, which can be reproduced and distributed by your company, can be found at <http://www.webility.md>. Webility, an Internet-based training and collaboration company, has developed the brochure to help educate people living with chronic pain who are using long-term opioids. The brochure delivers a message in plain language regarding some of the safety and risk concerns when taking opioids every day for chronic pain.

Please contact the WCRA with any questions regarding medical management of a claim that involves chronic pain. We are always happy to review files and work with our members on ways to best manage these complex claims.

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