

Use criteria for opioids

The decision to use opioids for chronic pain sufferers should not be made lightly, according to pain experts. When other methods are not working and opioids may be warranted, Dr. Steven Feinberg of the Palo Alto-based Feinberg Medical Group suggests physicians consider the "Four As" of pain treatment outcomes:

1. Adequate Analgesia -- pain relief.
2. Improved Activities of daily living -- psychosocial functioning.
3. Manageable or no Adverse effects -- side effects.
4. No evidence of Aberrant drug taking -- addiction-related outcomes.

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