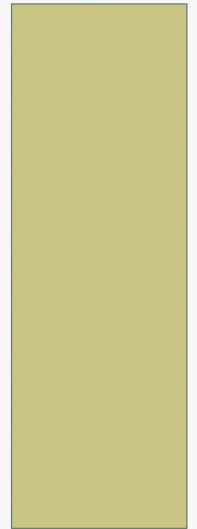


# SAFE OPIOID PRESCRIBING

ALAN MILLER, M.D.  
FERDINAND FORMOSO, D.O.



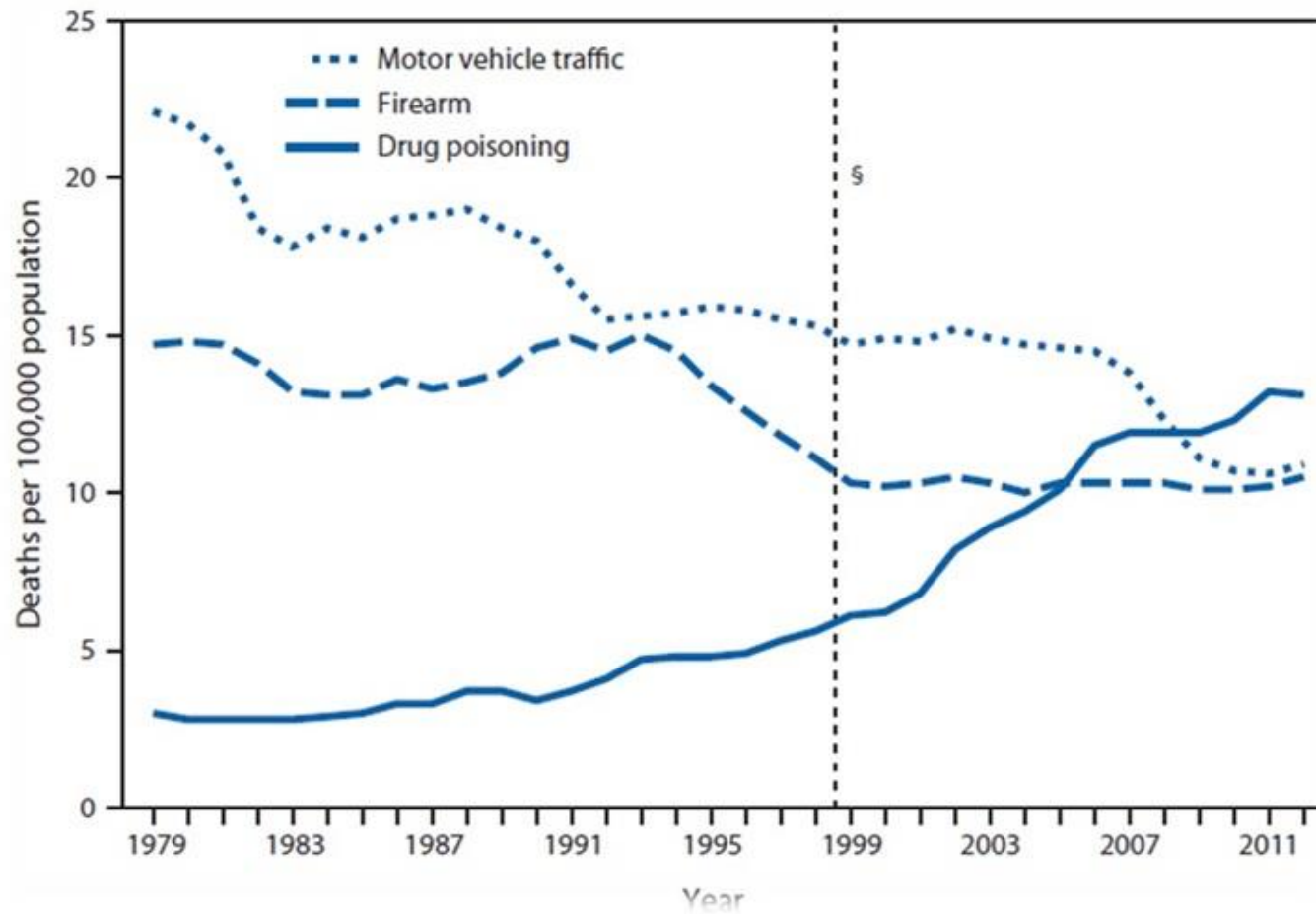
# THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

- Why are we here, having this conversation?
- Distribution through the pharmaceutical supply chain
  - equivalent of 96 mg of morphine per person in 1997
  - equivalent of 700 mg per person in 2007 (an increase of >600%!)
- About 9.3% of the population has drug or alcohol problems serious enough to require treatment
  - Increase in opiate availability is an “alternative fuel”
  - Ability to produce euphoria makes opiates attractive to addicts
  - Creates a bridge to heroin use

# THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

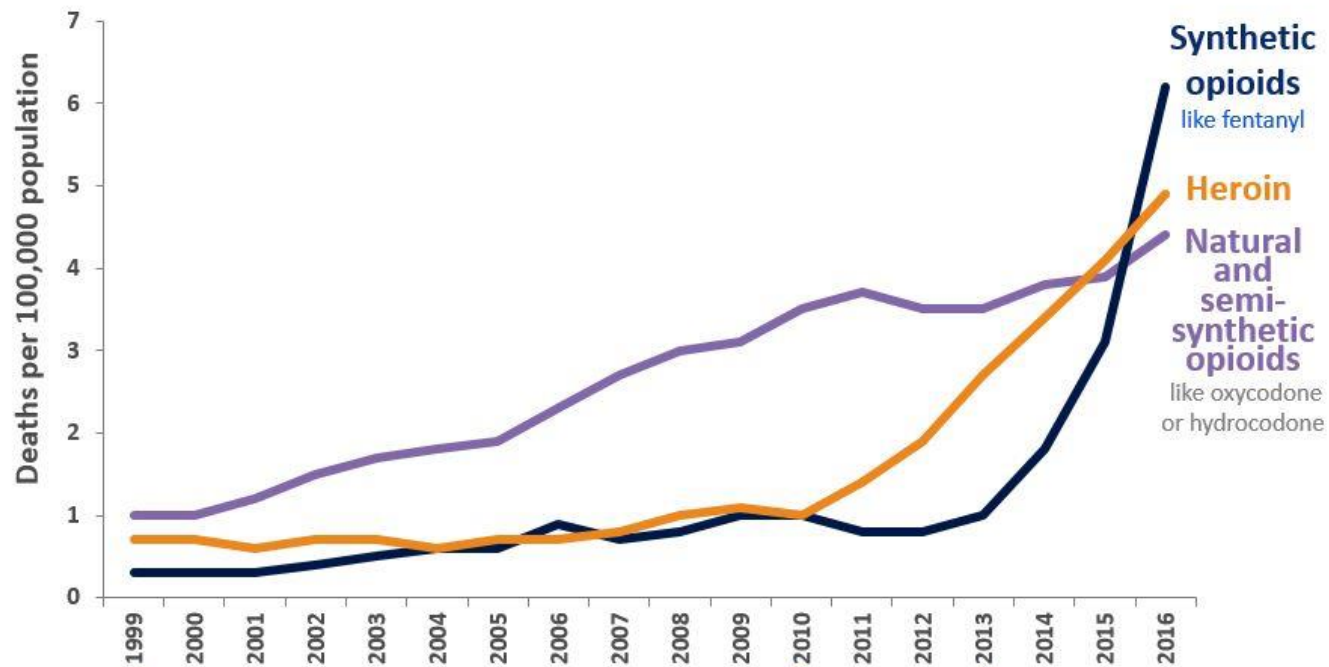
- As of 2008, the gateway drug for the youth in USA became prescription opioids instead of marijuana
  - Far more dangerous, as opioids are more addictive and there is the possibility of dying by overdose, unlike in the case of cannabis
  - 76% of nonmedical users report getting drugs that had been prescribed to someone else
- In 2016, approximately 63,000+ unintentional drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States
  - Up from 52,000+ in 2015
  - 40% of all opioid overdose deaths involved a prescription opioid

# THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC



# THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

## 3 Waves of the Rise in Opioid Overdose Deaths



Wave 1: Rise in Prescription Opioid Overdose Deaths

Wave 2: Rise in Heroin Overdose Deaths

Wave 3: Rise in Synthetic Opioid Overdose Deaths

# THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

## Poison Exposure Statistics, 2014

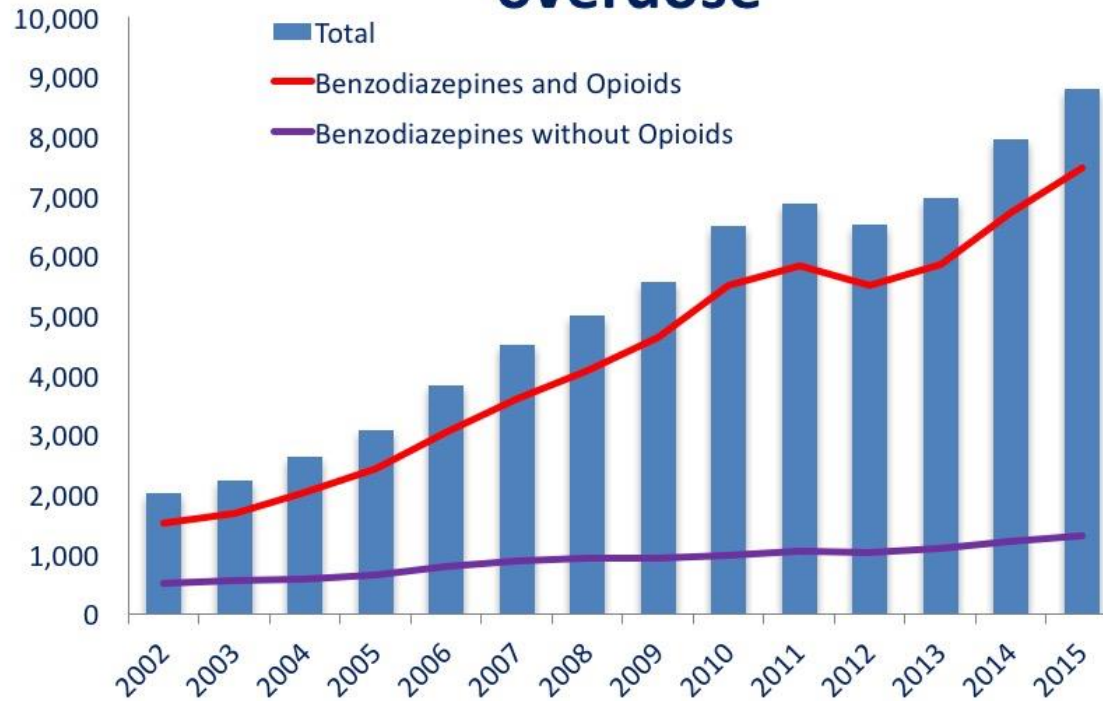
	No.	%
Analgesics	133,864	11.9
Sedative/Hypnotics/Antipsychotics	117,682	10.4
Antidepressants	75,622	6.7
Cardiovascular Drugs	68,579	6.1
Cleaning Substances (Household)	64,217	5.7
Alcohols	51,344	4.6
Anticonvulsants	41,738	3.7
Pesticides	39,968	3.5
Bites and Envenomations	36,944	3.3
Antihistamines	34,804	3.1

# THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

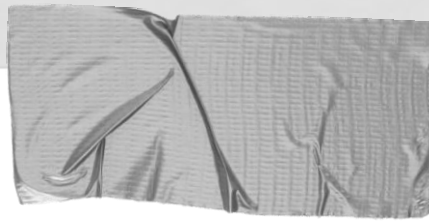
NIH National Institute on Drug Abuse



## Opioid involvement in benzodiazepine overdose

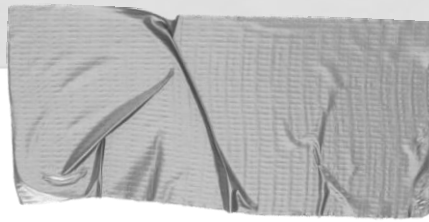


Source: National Center for Health Statistics, CDC Wonder



- Start low and go slow
- Check urine drug screen on 1st rx and at least annually (chronic narcotic pts)
- Check PDMP every rx





- Always start with instant release, not extended release
- Do not rx benzos and narcotics **"concurrently whenever possible."**
- Caution when using > 50 MED/day (morphine equivalents, see below), and avoid increasing to > 90MED/day or **"carefully justify a decision to titrate"** beyond that (chronic narcotic pts).

**MAX DAILY DOSE of narcotic recommended by CDC  
(equivalent to 90mg/day of morphine)**

60mg/day	Oxycodone
90mg/day	Hydrocodone
37mcg/hr/day	Fentanyl patch
22mg/day	Hydromorphone/dilaudid
30mg/day	Oxymorphone (opana)
450mg/day	Tramadol*
600mg/day	Codeine
225mg/day	Tapentadol (Nucynta)
30mg/day	Methadone
90mg/day	Morphine
1200mcg/day	Buprenorphine/suboxone/Belbuca (this is for pain only)
20mcg/hr/day	Butrans (buprenorphine) patch
300mg/day	Demerol (not indicated for chronic pain)

\*estimate, very poor data



## Examples

- Percocet 10/325 #120 = 60mg  
oxycodone = 90 MED
- Hydrocodone 10/325 #120 = 40mg  
hydrocodone = 40 MED
- Fentanyl patch 50mcg/hr = 121 MED  
(alone!)
- Oxycontin 20mg #60 + hydrocodone  
10/325 #60 = 60 MED + 20 MED = 80  
MED
- MS Contin 15mg #60 + hydrocodone  
10/325 #30 = 40 MED

# QUESTIONS

- What is an appropriate starting dose for opioids?
- How do you rotate opioids safely?
- How do you wean down medications safely and avoid withdrawal symptoms?
- Is it safe /appropriate to use methadone in a primary care setting?

# QUESTIONS

- When do you consider introducing buprenorphine?
- What is the safest approach to prescribing benzodiazepines and opioids?
  - What are the alternatives?
- Is it acceptable to use opioids in conjunction with medical cannabis?
- When should one refer a patient to a pain specialist?



# COASTAL SPINE & PAIN CENTER

## Our Northeast Florida Locations

With multiple locations serving Northeast Florida our offices provide patients with a comfortable environment, state-of-the-art technology and cutting-edge therapies tailored to each patient's individual needs.

- 📍 Orange Park
- 📍 Northside
- 📍 Eastpark
- 📍 Fernandina Beach
- 📍 Middleburg
- 📍 Bartram Park
- 📍 Beaches
- 📍 Riverside
- 📍 St. Marys

