

Opioid-Prescribing Patterns in Patients with Low Back or Lower Extremity Pain

Opioid-based treatment of low back pain (LBP) and lower extremity pain (LEP) has been associated with chronic opioid use



However, opioid-prescribing patterns in patients with LBP and LEP who undergo spine surgery are not completely clear

Retrospective cohort study

25,506 patients with LBP/LEP

- ✓ No prior opioid prescription
- ✓ Underwent spine surgery with 1 year of diagnosis








Opioid prescription

- Before surgery (n = 18,219)
- After surgery (n = 7,287)

Evaluation of opioid-prescribing patterns

Identification of frequency groups (Low vs. High)

Opioid prescription patterns

When prescribed	 Low frequency	 High frequency
Before surgery	—	 Likely to continue after surgery
After surgery	 Average daily morphine milligram equivalents decreased after surgery	 Incurred higher costs

Opioid use after LEP or LBP diagnosis is associated with longer duration and higher frequency of opioid use after surgery