

Psychological variables involved in opioid abuse or misuse in patients with non-oncological chronic pain (pp. 517-532)

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Psychological variables can be used to predict the risk of prescription opioid abuse. The aim of the present study was to analyse the predictive value of a set of these variables. Specifically, we analysed the association between the potential abuse and misuse of opioids and self-affirming mood, neuroticism, extraversion, anxiety and/or depression symptoms, and perceived pain intensity. The sample comprised 60 patients with chronic non-oncological pain (mean age= 60 years; 77% women, 78% married). Two stepwise multiple linear regression analyses were performed. The results indicate that anxiety and/or depression symptoms were the only variables associated with the potential abuse and current misuse of prescription opioids. We suggest the need for prior psychological assessment before deciding to initiate pharmacological therapy with opioids. Any anxiety or depression symptoms in these patients should be addressed before prescribing opioids.