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Alternatives to Opioids for Pain Relief

If pain management is one of your primary health concerns, you've probably talked with your doctor about pain relief methods. Chronic pain affects more than 100 million people in the United States, according to the National Academy of Medicine. Many chronic pain patients are prescribed opioids to help manage the pain, but due to the potential for misuse, doctors are leaning toward alternatives for pain management.

Although people are searching for long-term pain relief solutions outside of opioids, not everyone is looking for alternatives for long-term pain relief. Some people experiencing pains from common causes, such as dental procedures, lower back pain, nerve pain and migraines, can consider other options as well. This article highlights alternatives to opioids for pain relief.

Acetaminophen

Acetaminophen is an over-the-counter medicine. This can be considered first-line treatment for mild to moderate pain, such as lower back pain. Acetaminophen is often considered when trying to reduce opioid use and can be used concurrently to gradually reduce opioid intake.

NSAIDs

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as aspirin or ibuprofen, are commonly used to decrease swelling and inflammation to help reduce moderate pain. NSAIDs are over-the-counter and considered an alternative to opioids to alleviate pain caused by dental work and migraines. A physician can advise on how to incorporate NSAIDs into a pain relief routine.

Antidepressants

Certain antidepressants can be used to manage chronic nerve pain. They can also relieve back pain, fibromyalgia and diabetes-related nerve pain. Since antidepressants can change your mood, it's important to thoroughly discuss this alternative with a doctor before committing to it.

Non-drug Treatments

There are also non-drug treatments that can be used in correlation with common drug treatments. These treatments include ice, massage, physical therapy, acupuncture and relaxation training. These methods can be extremely helpful when discussing pain relief. Every non-drug treatment is different, so you may have to try a few to find the one or the combination of treatments that are right for you.

Summary

Chronic pain affects millions of people in the United States annually. While opioid treatment was a go-to method for many, people are now starting to search for alternatives for a multitude of reasons. Remember to discuss these methods with your doctor before making any significant changes to medications and your pain management plan.

For additional information or resources about pain relievers, reach out to Hebert Insurance Group, Inc..

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