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POST-OPERATIVE OPIOIDS USE, THE OPIOID CRISIS IN ANESTHESIOLOGY

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Relevance. The relevance of deliberating on the subject matter 'Post-operative opioids, the opioid crisis in Anaesthesiology' is the rising rate of patients who wind up with one complication or the other from the misuse of opioids after surgery. Opioid crisis also known as opioid epidemic is the rapid increase in the overuse, misuse/abuse and overdose deaths attributed to opioids

Aim: anaesthesiologists and other healthcare workers involved in peri-operative care should be able to trace the causes responsible for the unprecedented growth in the use of opioids and the catastrophic impact these medicines are having in all parts of the world. By close and attentive monitoring, and recognising the signs of opioid overdose and misuse to be able to ameliorate outcomes, minimise impact and prevent death.

Materials and methods. A retrospective study and data collection from various regulations regarding opioid crisis from the American Society of Anaesthesiologists (ASA) pubsasa.org, Mayo Clinic <https://www.mayoclinic.org>, Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) and the International Anaesthesia Research Society (IARS) <https://www.iars.org>, <https://www.addictioncenter.com> additionally textbooks such as Basic and Clinical Pharmacology 10th edition by Bertram G. Katzung, Morgan & Mikhail's Clinical Anaesthesiology 7th edition, Anaesthesiology third edition by Da third edition by David E. Longnecker. Significant data was collected and utilised.

Results and their discussion. The opioid epidemic specifically refers to the growing number of deaths and hospitalisations from opioids including both prescription and illicit drugs. The overall goal of an anesthesiologist during peri-operative care is to provide sufficient analgesia after surgery and minimise the amounts of opioids used while achieving these goals. One of the habitual reasons for opioid overdose is to relieve pain. At lower doses, opioids can induce sleep. But, higher doses slow the heart and respiratory rates which can lead to death. The pleasure derived from taking opioids can lead to the development of physical and psychological dependence, tolerance and ultimately leading to addiction (Opioid Use Disorder-OUD). Opioids can also be used to treat coughing and diarrhea. Recent data from the USA reports that approximately 6% of surgical patients (in comparison with 0.4% of non-surgical patients) persistently use opioids 90-180 days after surgery. Anesthesiologists are charged with the task of identifying patients who are at risk of postoperative persistent opioid use or misuse.

Conclusion. Opioid overdose is an acute event with a potentially fatal outcome, therefore surgery is generally associated with an increased risk of opioid overdose. Anesthesiologists play a key role in setting patient expectations for pain management during the preoperative period. Doing so may help mitigate risk for postoperative opioid use and subsequent persistent use and misuse.