

The National Society of Dental Practitioners and the Dentist's Advantage Insurance Program for Dentists

RISK MANAGEMENT ALERT

Study reveals dental opioid prescriptions may increase risk of opioid use, abuse

A new study in [JAMA Internal Medicine](#) concluded that in opioid-naïve 16- to 25-year-olds who received an opioid prescription from a dentist, there was a 6.8 percent greater risk of persistent opioid use and a 5.3 percent greater risk of subsequent diagnosis of opioid use disorder compared to age- and sex-matched controls who did not receive an opioid prescription.¹ Read the study, "Association of Opioid Prescriptions From Dental Clinicians for U.S. Adolescents and Youth Adults with Subsequent Opioid Use and Abuse," [here](#).



The study goes on to suggest that a "substantial proportion of adolescents and young adults are exposed to opioids through dental clinicians".¹ This supports the findings from articles published in the *Journal of the American Dental Association* earlier in 2018, that found dental opioid prescriptions for 11- to 18-year-olds [increased](#) from 99.7 per 1000 dental patients in 2010 to 165.9 per 1000 dental patients in 2015,² and that dental clinicians are responsible for nearly [one quarter](#) of the first opioid prescriptions for the same age group.³

These articles highlight the importance of staying up-to-date on best practices for pain management, opioid prescribing, drug diversion, and chemical dependency issues.

Additional Learning:

- Listen to the two-part webinar series presented by Dentist's Advantage and CNA on managing risks associated with dental patients and opioids [here](#).
- Learn about the American Dental Association's efforts to end opioid abuse [here](#).
- Read the Academy of General Dentistry's whitepaper, "The Role of Dentistry in Addressing Opioid Abuse," on the role of dentistry in opioid abuse [here](#).

Resources:

1. Schroeder AR, Dehghan M, Newman TB, Bentley JP, Park KT. Association of Opioid Prescriptions From Dental Clinicians for US Adolescents and Young Adults With Subsequent Opioid Use and Abuse. *JAMA Intern Med*. Published online December 03, 2018. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2018.5419
2. Gupta N, Vujicic M, Blatz A. Opioid prescribing practices from 2010 through 2015 among dentists in the United States: What do claims data tell us? *J AmDent Assoc*. 2018;149(4):237-245.e6. doi:10.1016/j.adaj.2018.01.005
3. Gupta N, Vujicic M, Blatz A. Multiple opioid prescriptions among privately insured dental patients in the United States: evidence from claims data. *J AmDent Assoc*. 2018;149(7):619-627 e1. Medline: 29656805 doi:10.1016/j.adaj.2018.02.025

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