Introduction

- The opioid epidemic is a leading public health problem in the U.S. [1].
- Opioid related deaths have nearly quadrupled since 1999 [2].
- Physicians may be prescribing opioids for more than what is required for postoperative pain control, ultimately leading to increased risk for opioid abuse and addiction [3].
- Understanding expectations of analgesics is critical, as patient pressure can influence prescribing patterns [4].
- Management of post-op pain is challenging due to type of surgery, patient age, and pain threshold; however, one of the main factors leading to postoperative pain is patient expectations [5,6].
- Patient perceptions of perioperative pain medication are poorly understood. This survey aims to understand patient expectations of perioperative analgesics.

Methods

- Following IRB approval, patients >18 years old, undergoing preoperative assessment for a scheduled surgical procedure at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital were recruited for study participation.
- A thirteen-question survey was distributed to eligible participants in the preoperative area. Five questions were used for this analysis. (Figure 1)
- Descriptive statistics were performed on the study sample and after age stratification, data are presented as percentages and means±SD.

Results

- 503 patients were surveyed.
- Demographics included age, gender, prior surgery, prior opioid use, and chronic pain history. (Table 1)
- 100% of patients believed they would receive analgesics after surgery. Breakdown of each analgesic is listed below. (Figure 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>All Patients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female Patients, N (%)</td>
<td>237 (51)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age, Mean</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Prior Surgery, N (%)</td>
<td>468 (93)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Prior Opioid Use, N (%)</td>
<td>396 (77)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Chronic Pain, N (%)</td>
<td>224 (45)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of Prior Substance Abuse, N (%)</td>
<td>34 (7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Perception of Patients Receiving Analgesics Postoperatively

![Figure 2](image1.png)

Figure 2 reveals the percentage of patients that expected to receive certain analgesics after surgery, with opioids being the most common.

- Figures 3 and 4 demonstrate a comparison between patients expecting vs not expecting specific analgesics to be prescribed at discharge in relation to which medications they believed would be effective vs ineffective.

![Figure 3](image2.png)

Figure 3 demonstrates that patients expecting to receive post-op opioid prescriptions believed opioids would be effective in controlling their pain (p<0.05). This difference in expectations was not observed in patients expecting prescriptions for non-opioids.

Conclusion

- The results show patients expected to experience pain after surgery and be prescribed analgesics. Patients anticipated receiving analgesics they perceived most effective, which was most often an opioid.
- The perception of superior efficacy of opioids is worthy of further study as this is inconsistent with the literature, and education may be needed to bridge this gap.
- With increased use of multimodal techniques, we hope patients will begin to accept non-opioid therapy after surgery.
- As the opioid crisis continues, cultural attitudes toward pain and medications will play a central role in reducing the prevalence of opioids in healthcare and society.

References