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Illicit Opioid Overdose in a University Dental Clinic

Illicit drug use and overdose have become epidemic in our society. Such cases are occurring with more frequency in private and public places and may occur in healthcare facilities including private dental offices. This case report highlights one such occurrence in a university dental clinic.

The department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Anesthesiology (OMFS) at the Ohio State University College of Dentistry received an emergency alert concerning a suspected syncope patient who was locked in an upstairs restroom adjacent to the advanced endodontic clinic. A response team was dispatched to the clinic along with a crash cart.

The 30-year-old Caucasian male patient was found leaning against the restroom wall in a semi-lucid state, with a flushed face, short and rapid breathing, and speaking incoherently. Drug paraphernalia was laying on the floor of the restroom and blood and tract marks were observed on the

patient's arms. It was apparent that the patient had locked himself in the restroom to use illicit substances. He was asked to sit down and standard monitors were applied. His blood pressure (BP) was found to be 148/103 with a heart rate (HR) of 120. Oxygen was applied by facemask at 6 L/minute and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) was called to transport the patient to the hospital where he could be more appropriately monitored and treated for drug intoxication.

While awaiting transport, an intravenous infusion was started with 0.9% sodium chloride and the patient interviewed to determine what substances had been injected. Initially denying any drug use, the patient eventually admitted to cocaine use earlier in the day which explained the elevated HR and BP readings for someone of his age and body habitus. As time passed, the patient became more somnolent, respiratory rate declined, breath sounds became shallow, and pupils began to constrict.

Suspecting opioid overdose, naloxone 0.4 mg/ml was diluted to 40 micrograms (mcg) per milliliter and 80 mcg increments were given every one to two minutes titrated to clinical effect.

As the naloxone was given, the patient became more alert and coherent, the respiratory rate returned to baseline, heart rate increased from 106 to 124, and the pupils dilated, as one would expect after sole cocaine use. A total of 240 mcg of naloxone was given over ten minutes. Once the effects of the opioid had been antagonized, the patient became extremely agitated stating that the response

team had "ruined his high". Soon thereafter, EMS arrived to transport the patient to the emergency department for continued treatment.

Opioid abuse is ubiquitous in today's society. Death rates are at an all-time high, most prominently in the East-Central United States. The patient in this case was likely using heroin (diamorphine) which has nearly identical properties to its parent drug, morphine, but is more lipophilic.

As with any emergent situation, treatment should begin with a primary assessment and activation of EMS. For the conscious patient, standard monitors should be applied,

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Office Medical Emergencies



TEN MINUTES SAVES A LIFE!

Anesthesia Research Foundation of the American Dental Society of Anesthesiology

supplemental oxygen administered, IV access established and a medical history obtained from the patient or an associate. Attempting to discern what drugs and medications have been taken is helpful. If opioid overdose is suspected, naloxone

0.4 mg/mL should be diluted to 40 micrograms/mL and given in 1-5 mcg/kg increments every one to three minutes titrated to clinical effect. Once the patient has return of mentation and adequate ventilation, they should be closely monitored for

at least two hours or until EMS arrives.

1) "Opioid Overdose." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 19 Dec. 2017, www.cdc.gov/

drugoverdose/data/statedeaths.html.

Dr. Brian Simpson
announces the thirty eighth meeting of the
NANUET IMPLANT STUDY GROUP

Speaker: Dennis Urban, CDT
Certified Dental Technician
Nobel Biocare, Mahwah, NJ

"Getting the Edge on Removables"

Tuesday, June 11, 2019

Dinner: 6:30 Presentation: 7:00 — 9:00 pm

Restaurant X 117 NY-303 Congers, NY

2 CE credits awarded by the Ninth District Dental Association
Cost: \$50.00

To register, please call: 845-623-3497 or email: office@drbriansimpson.com

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-Albert Einstein*