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Online Pain Assignment

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1. State the differences between substance abuse, substance misuse, drug addiction, and pseudoaddiction.
  - a. Substance abuse is known as the wrongful use of a drug that is not prescribed to them by a physician for the effects of the drugs, usually to result in a high. Substance misuse is the incorrect use of a drug that differs from the way it was prescribed by the doctor. In this case, it is prescribed to them, but they are not taking it as prescribed. This could be intentional or unintentional. An intentional form of substance misuse is using a drug for a different reason that it was prescribed to the patient (using a pain pill as a sleep aid). Unintentional substance misuse is taking a pill prescribed every 8 hours only when the patient feels like they need it (not taking a BP medication because their BP is stable). Drug addiction is a physiological process in which the patient cannot manage their use of the drug because of the known effects it gives them. The patient cannot manage the drug because they have impulses and cravings for the continued use of the drug, even while knowing the consequences of the drug and drug addiction. Pseudoaddiction is when a patient exhibits signs of addiction because their pain is poorly managed. In this situation, the signs of addiction cease once the patient's pain becomes managed.
  
2. Explain the patient signs and symptoms associated with each of the common drugs of abuse.
  - a. The common drugs of abuse are marijuana, hallucinogens, alcohol, cocaine, and heroin. The signs and symptoms of marijuana abuse include hypotension and bradycardia when it is in high concentrations in the body and tachycardia and mild hypertension in lower concentrations. Acute intoxication can be accompanied by euphoria, paranoia, anxiety, and depression. The signs and

symptoms of hallucinogens include agitation, hallucinations, and delirium. Adverse effects of PCP (phencyclidine) can be severe sympathetic activation, respiratory depression and delirium. Adverse effects of LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide) can be hyperthermia, nausea, perspiration, tachycardia, hypertension, hyperglycemia, and dry mouth. Signs and symptoms of alcohol abuse include signs of depression, slurred speech, bradycardia, respiratory depression, hypotension, and coma. Signs and symptoms of cocaine abuse include tachycardia, hypertension, seizures, coronary vasospasm, myocardial infarction, stroke, palpitations, or dyspnea. Signs and symptoms of heroin abuse include miosis, hypothermia, bradycardia, and respiratory depression.

3. State your thoughts on pain control. Do you feel individuals with chronic pain should be refused pain medication by a physician or pharmacist? Are there other treatments, or avenues available to assist with pain control? Give examples of other ways to deal with pain and how can you as a nurse encourage the use of other treatments?
  - a. Individuals with real chronic pain should not have to suffer because of what drug abusers have caused. Patients with chronic pain should be allowed pain medications in a strict manner. I think they need to be tested monthly on the levels of that drug in their system and count their pills regardless of abuse history to make sure the medication is not being abused. However, I do think that alternative forms of pain relief should be offered and tried before prescription pain medications are administered. I think acupuncture, massage, physical therapy, hot and cold therapy, and other types of therapies should be tried before resorting to medications and that these therapies should be covered by insurance. If these therapies do not help or only relieve some of the pain, I do believe that patients should be allowed pain relief medications to relieve chronic pain.
  
4. What are some signs of abuse?
  - a. Signs of drug abuse include taking a drug even after it is no longer needed for its initial use. A big sign of abuse is when the patient notices that the same dose of a

drug that used to relieve the pain no longer does. The patient could also show mild signs of withdrawal when the drug is wearing off, such as shaky, nauseas, headaches, or fatigue. Another sign of abuse is when the patient finds themselves thinking about the drug constantly (when the next dose is, how they will get their next refill, etc.) Other signs include losing interest in things the patient used to enjoy, borrowing or stealing money, nodding out, bloodshot eyes, and being careless.

5. What education should be provided to individuals that are being released or discharged with prescriptions for pain control?
  - a. The patient should be educated on the frequency of the dose and taught the emphasis on taking the drug as described. The patient should be made aware of signs and symptoms of drug misuse and abuse and the beginning symptoms of addiction. If the patient does not realize that these symptoms can indicate addiction, they might let the symptoms continue thinking its not big deal. At that point, usually addiction is hard to reverse. They should be advised to never take more than the dose prescribed, even if the medication is not helping. The patient should contact their doctor if the medication is no longer working. They also need to be educated to keep the medication out of reach of children and locked up or hidden to prevent anyone from stealing and abusing it. The patient should also be aware of the side effects to watch for, adverse reactions if the medication is a new one, contraindications, and things to alert the doctor for.