Doctors prescribing too many opioids after nose jobs

November 9 2017

(HealthDay)—Could some patients recovering from a nose job get a

problem they didn't bargain for?

After these operations, patients are often sent home with more opioid pain pills than they need, increasing the risk for misuse, researchers say.

About 218,000 cosmetic nose surgeries were performed in the United States in 2015. In fact, "rhinoplasty" is one of the most common plastic surgery procedures in the United States, which is experiencing an opioid epidemic.

The new study included 62 patients at two private practices and an academic health center who underwent rhinoplasty. The patients were prescribed the opioid painkiller Vicodin (hydrocodone/acetaminophen) for pain relief after surgery.

On average, patients used nine of the 20 to 30 tablets they were prescribed. Seventy-four percent used 15 or fewer tablets, and only three patients needed refills. The number of tablets used was not associated with gender, age or surgical factors.

Most people who misuse opioids for nonmedical use get them from friends and family who have leftover medication.

"To mitigate the misuse or diversion of physician-prescribed opioid medications, surgeons must be steadfast in prescribing an appropriate amount of pain medication after surgery," Dr. Sagar Patel and colleagues wrote.

Patel is an ear, nose and throat specialist with Facial Plastic Surgery Associates in Houston.

The study was published Nov. 9 in the journal *JAMA Facial Plastic Surgery*.

Citation: Doctors prescribing too many opioids after nose jobs (2017, November 9) retrieved 9 April 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-11-doctors-opioids-nose-jobs.html