

Buprenorphine-naloxone effectively treats narcotic bowel syndrome in a long-suffering patient

May 12 2020

The combination of buprenorphine and naloxone should be investigated as a potential treatment for narcotic bowel syndrome. The drugs seem to work together to address the underlying pathology of the syndrome. Findings from a brief research report are published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

Narcotic bowel [syndrome](#) is a chronic [pain](#) syndrome that occurs with opioid use and persists as opioid treatment is continued or escalated. More than half of patients with this syndrome who undergo opioid detoxification return to [opioid use](#) within a few months because of continued pain.

Researchers from the University of Rochester reported the case of a 41-year old woman who had been taking fast-acting opioids for pain for 8 years, with continued episodes of [abdominal pain](#), nausea, and vomiting, requiring hundreds of hospital visits. When other causes of pain had been ruled out and all other treatments failed, the clinicians treated her narcotic bowel syndrome with buprenorphine and naloxone.

The patient reported greatly improved abdominal pain over the first few days, and her pain resolved entirely after 1 week. She had no further episodes of vomiting, and her nausea resolved almost entirely after 1 month. According to the researchers, this approach may work because the combination of a narcotic partial agonist with a low-dose antagonist

could result in improved pain control because the antagonist would block Gs pathways.

More information: *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2020).
<http://annals.org/aim/article/doi/10.7326/L19-0798>

Provided by American College of Physicians

Citation: Buprenorphine-naloxone effectively treats narcotic bowel syndrome in a long-suffering patient (2020, May 12) retrieved 24 April 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-05-buprenorphine-naloxone-effectively-narcotic-bowel-syndrome.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--