(HealthDay)—For patients undergoing primary spinal deformity surgery, postoperative outcomes are improved for those taking narcotics preoperatively and for those not taking narcotics, according to a study published in the Dec. 1 issue of The Spine Journal.

Addisu Mesfin, M.D., from the University of Rochester in New York, and colleagues conducted a retrospective study of prospectively collected data involving 253 adult patients undergoing primary spinal deformity surgery (168 nonnarcotic patients [NoNarc]; 85 patients taking narcotics before surgery). The authors examined the role of preoperative narcotic use and its effect on outcome after spinal deformity surgery. Patients were followed for a minimum of two years (average, 47.4 months).

The researchers found that at the latest follow-up, 88 percent of NoNarc patients were still not taking narcotics, whereas 61 percent of prior narcotics patients were off narcotics (P

"Thus, narcotic use in selected primary degenerative scoliosis patients may not be as much of a negative predictor of outcome as has been previously perceived," the authors write.

One author and his institution disclosed financial ties to the medical device industry.

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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