Alcohol and substance abuse

OVERDOSE DEATHS INVOLVING ALCOHOL IN US VETERANS

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Statement of purpose Alcohol-involved overdose deaths have increased in recent years and often occur in combination with other substances. To inform overdose prevention efforts, this study assessed patient characteristics and treatment utilization among Veterans who died from alcohol-involved overdoses nationally.

Methods/Approach Using Veterans Health Administration (VHA) records linked to National Death Index data from 2012 to 2017, trends in overdose mortality were examined and patient characteristics and treatment receipt were compared across alcohol overdose categories (alcohol alone, alcohol+opioids, alcohol+other substances).

Results Across the study period, 1497 Veterans died from alcohol overdose alone, 1078 Veterans died from alcohol + opioids and 289 died from alcohol + other substances. Veterans who overdosed on alcohol + opioids and alcohol + other substances were more likely to be homeless, live in urban areas, and more likely to have comorbid depressive disorder and stimulant use disorder. Only a minority of veterans who overdosed on alcohol + opioids and 289 died from alcohol + other substances. To inform overdose prevention efforts, this study assessed patient characteristics and treatment utilization.

Conclusions The vast majority of patients who died from alcohol overdose did not receive treatment in substance use disorder settings or effective medication treatments.

Significance This study is the first to examine treatment characteristics of people who died from alcohol-involved overdose and suggests further efforts are needed to prevent the spectrum of alcohol overdose deaths including implementing alcohol use disorder treatment in settings outside of substance use disorder settings.

TBI/concussion injuries

VISIO-VESTIBULAR FUNCTION OF PEDIATRIC PATIENTS PRESENTING WITH THE FIRST CONCUSSION VS. A RECURRENT CONCUSSION

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Statement of purpose The purpose of this study was to investigate visio-vestibular examination (VVE) outcomes in high school-aged patients presenting with their first concussion vs. recurrent concussion.

Methods/Approach This study was performed by querying data collected prospectively in the electronic health record for patients aged 14–18 years old presenting for their initial injury visit to specialty concussion care centers within 28 days of injury between January 2018 and August 2020. Demographic information including lifetime concussions were self-reported prior to the start of the exam. The VVE consisted of 9 maneuvers: smooth pursuit, horizontal/vertical saccades and gaze stability, binocular convergence, left/right monocular