



## Application of Opioids in Clinical Medicine

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### Message from the Guest Editor

There have been enormous changes in how we use opioids in the past 40 years, especially in high-income countries. In the 1970s and 1980s, opioids were only reserved for acute pain, surgical pain, or palliative cancer patients. In the 1990s, with the advent of long-acting formulations, there was a spread of using opioids for conditions that were not life-threatening, such as mechanical back pain, inflammatory pain, and neuropathic pain. With the large amount of people taking opioids, there was a surge of many people who became dependent and addicted. Consequently, those people who cannot get opioids from prescriptions need to obtain them from illicit sources, which opened the markets for more and more potent opioids, including oxycodone, heroine, fentanyl, and more recently carfentanyl.

We are interested in studies looking at the clinical applications of prescription opioids, neurobiological mechanisms in humans, clinical trials, meta-analyses, education for prescribers, and policy and programs to mitigate the risks of opioids.





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