

Under Par: Interprofessional Prescribing and Dispensing of Opioid Medications



Pain Management Treatment Targets

When you are prescribing or recommending multiple medications for pain management, aim to use medications that target different receptors so you are not overloading one receptor type and decreasing treatment efficacy.

Analgesic target	Analgesic Medication
Calcium Channel Blockers (selective to brain)	Gabapentin, pregabalin
Central Alpha-2 Receptor Agonists	Clonidine, dexmedetomidine, tizanidine
COX Enzyme Inhibitors	Acetaminophen, diclofenac, ibuprofen, ketorolac, naproxen
Dopamine Receptor Antagonists	Chlorpromazine, droperidol, haloperidol, metoclopramide, prochlorperazine
GABA Receptor Agonist	Baclofen, propofol
Glucocorticoid Receptor	Methylprednisolone, prednisone, triamcinolone
Glutamate/NMDA Receptor Antagonists	Ketamine, magnesium, nitrous oxide, propofol
Mu-opioid Receptor Agonists	Buprenorphine, fentanyl, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, morphine, oxycodone, tramadol
Serotonin and Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors	Amitriptyline, duloxetine
Serotonin Receptor Agonists	Sumatriptan
Serotonin Receptor Antagonist	Cyclobenzaprine
Sodium Channel Blockers	Bupivacaine, carbamazepin, lidocaine, procaine, suzetrigine
TRPV1 Receptor Agonists	Acetaminophen, capsaicin

This list is not comprehensive, but intended to be a resource for you as you help patients achieve meaningful pain relief. Considerations should include non-pharmacological therapies, concomittant conditions, side effect profiles, cost, and difficulty of adherence. Opioid medications should be used at the lowest dose for the shortest time possible.

