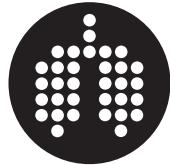


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Educational questions.

"Opioids for chronic refractory breathlessness: patient predictors of beneficial response"

1. With chronic refractory breathlessness, which of the following statements is CORRECT?

- An improvement of 10 mm (0–100 mm visual analogue scale) in intensity is a clinically useful therapeutic target. The breathlessness can be improved by treating the causative condition. A reduction in breathlessness intensity should be the primary aim of management.

2. Opioid therapy for chronic refractory breathlessness: which of the following statements is CORRECT?

- Elderly people over the age of 85 are very unlikely to benefit. People with underlying heart disease are more likely to benefit.
- People who spend more than 50% of the day in bed or chair are unlikely to benefit. Younger age is an independent predictor of those likely to benefit.

3. Which of the following rationales is INCORRECT? Higher baseline intensity of breathlessness predicted a beneficial response to opioids because:

- Breathlessness is worse in those with more advanced disease. Extreme variables are likely to become closer to the average when repeated. Those with less intense symptoms have less scope for improvement.

4. Clinical recommendations: which of the following statements is CORRECT?

- Eight patients need to be treated with opioids for their breathlessness for five to gain benefit. A therapeutic opioid trial is NOT recommended for the very elderly. Opioid related side-effects are of little concern at the doses required to treat breathlessness.
- Patients were 4.6-times more likely to receive harm than benefit from opioids.