

When painkillers become dangerous

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According to the latest statistics compiled by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2007 painkillers killed twice as many people as cocaine and five times as many as heroin” (Harvard Health Publications, n. d., pars. 4 & 5). Further, an experience related to me by a friend acknowledged the veracity and credibility of the information contained in the book.

Brief Summary

The book proffered a comprehensive discussion of how addiction develops from the use of prescription drugs, specifically OxyContin, among others. What started as a feeling of elation and relief for being able to relieve the pain of patients in extreme excoriating conditions, unsuspecting and initially lack of understanding of its addictive properties, led to young doctors to prescribe these drugs in unmonitored frequency and dozes. In conjunction and active collaboration with other medical practitioners such as Seppala, Meyers, Gardin, White, and Brown, Pinsky has compiled and written explanations as to how addiction treatment works, how to intervene on a loved one’s addiction, and seeing addiction not only as an individual’s dilemma but as a family disease. The experience shared on Carol, a successful surgeon who got addicted to Vicodin enlightened readers on the reason why victims are not able to simply stop despite the imminent danger and knowledge of the drastic effects of the drug. As explained, “ addiction is a disease of the brain characterized by the compulsive, ongoing use of substances in spite of significant adverse consequences” (Pinsky, Sepalla, Meyer, Garden, White, & Brown, 2004, p. 32). The alternative modes of treatment noted for those addicted to painkillers range from being confined in a rehabilitation facility, opting for an outpatient treatment program, or being given a medication treatment to counter the craving. However, as <https://assignbuster.com/when-painkillers-become-dangerous/>

indicated treatment would depend on a diversity of factors including age, gender, ethnicity, and culture; the commitment and determination to get well, and the holistic support of different entities: family, loved ones, community support, and formal medical assistance.

Personal Reaction

One's initial reaction was understanding and compassion for those who have been victimized by the situation. A friend shared a story of her husband who had multiple surgeries and a diabetic who got addicted to pain relievers starting from Nalbuphine to Demerol. As she narrated her story, she confirmed that the disease and addiction affected the whole family in terms of taking a toll on their finances and the time spent looking for alternative sources for the drugs. Sadly, despite having tried confined rehabilitation, her husband reverted to painkillers after another traumatic experience and eventually, deteriorating health conditions led to chronic renal failure and demise. This only proves that though there are modes of treatment for addiction, especially to painkillers, the effectiveness of the treatment approach critically and significantly depends on the individual concerned, despite the support and assistance offered by others. With this awareness and recognition from the medical community, more stringent measures must be imposed in the initial use and prescription of these drugs to prevent unsuspecting patients on the adverse effects that could drastically change their lives forever.