

From the Editor

Answering the Call for Effective Assessment and Treatment of Pain

Pain is the most common chief complaint seen in primary care. In fact, an estimated one-third of all Americans will experience severe chronic pain at some point in their lives. In 2000, a Congressional mandate declared the years 2000 through 2010 as the Decade of Pain Control and Research to facilitate professional awareness and promote appropriate management of patients in pain. Furthermore, the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and the Department of Health and Human Services have begun to include pain control criteria alongside other criteria for accreditation or reimbursement. These significant changes in the healthcare landscape demand that practitioners be well-acquainted with current means of pain assessment and treatment.



Successful pain management necessitates a thorough initial assessment and contemplation of a wide variety of powerful analgesic options. Not surprisingly, the most effective pain management strategies include both pharmacological and nonpharmacological interventions.

This issue of *CE-TODAY* is dedicated to improving functional outcomes in your patients with chronic pain and begins with an interview on page 7 with **Gregory B. Holm, PhD, ARNP-C**, an assistant professor at the University of South Florida in both the College of Nursing and the College of Medicine. In this timely interview, Dr. Holm discusses pain syndromes most commonly seen in the primary care setting as well as the consequences of inadequate pain management.

Our feature article on page 19 by **Allison R. Edmonds, APRN-BC**, and **Gregory B. Holm, PhD, ARNP-C**, addresses the management of pain in osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis and emphasizes the importance of a biopsychosocial approach to therapy that includes pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic therapies as well as a focus on patient education. Next, I encourage you to test your skills by teaming up with colleagues to discuss real case data in the *CE-TODAY* Web Workshop virtual classroom (see page 28 for further details).

I am confident you will find the interactive courses in this issue of *CE-TODAY for Nurse Practitioners* and on the companion CEonCD both valuable and practical in helping you create effective management strategies for your patients. The courses are also available on the *CE-TODAY* Web site (www.ce-today.com) as well as through our link on the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Web site (www.aanp.org). As always, we welcome and appreciate your feedback to ensure that *CE-TODAY* remains a trusted and valuable resource in your clinical practice.

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CE-TODAY™

For Nurse Practitioners

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