Hydrocodone/acetaminophen is an immediate-release (IR) opioid indicated for the treatment of moderate to severe pain. In a retrospective cohort study using administrative claims databases, we aimed to assess the prevalence of long-term therapy with IR hydrocodone/acetaminophen, with a focus on whether patients used the index prescription in an intermission-free manner.

**Objectives:**
- Assess the prevalence of long-term therapy with IR hydrocodone/acetaminophen among patients newly starting therapy with IR hydrocodone/acetaminophen.
- Evaluate the proportion of patients who used the index prescription in an intermission-free manner.

**Methods:**
- **Study design:** A retrospective cohort study using administrative claims databases.
- **Data source:** Two large integrated health plans.
- **Eligibility criteria:** Patients who initiated hydrocodone/acetaminophen therapy between January 2009 and December 2011 were included. Patients were excluded if they met criteria for chronic opioid therapy.
- **Enrollment period:** Patients were enrolled if they filled an index prescription for hydrocodone/acetaminophen with a duration of use ≥ 45 days.
- **Follow-up:** Patients were followed for up to one year after the index prescription.

**Results:**
- The prevalence of long-term therapy with IR hydrocodone/acetaminophen was 4.1% of patients who initiated therapy.
- Only a small proportion of patients who initiated hydrocodone/acetaminophen therapy in the database continued treatment for longer than 3 months (0.9%).
- Of the patients who met enrollment criteria, 50,615 new ER morphine users who met enrollment criteria.

**Conclusions:**
- The prevalence of long-term therapy with IR hydrocodone/acetaminophen was low, but the absolute number of patients was still substantial.
- Patients could also use other prescription or over-the-counter acetaminophen products, so the impact of these products could be large.

**Strengths and Limitations:**
- Administrative claims databases provide a rich resource, with large sample sizes and the ability to track prescription data longitudinally.
- However, prescription medication use is not accounted for during periods of hospitalization.
- The majority of the three samples were females; younger individuals (18-34 years) comprised a greater proportion of the two IR opioid samples than the ER morphine sample.

**References:**
[3] Acetaminophen is one of the most widely used analgesic compounds worldwide, but its use has been associated with liver toxicity in overdose situations.

**Conflict of Interest:**
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