

Opioid Prescribing Patterns and Potential for Fall Risk in Older Adult Illinoisans

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Background

- Opioid epidemic has been a national issue for many years
- US population 65 years of age and older is around 17%, but they make up just over 25% of long-term users of opioids
- Greater risk for negative outcomes due to pharmacokinetic changes related to aging and polypharmacy
- One-third of adults over 65 fall each year; this is greater among users of opioids

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to assess opioid prescribing patterns that may be associated with increased risk for falls among older adults in Illinois and to evaluate patterns by age category.

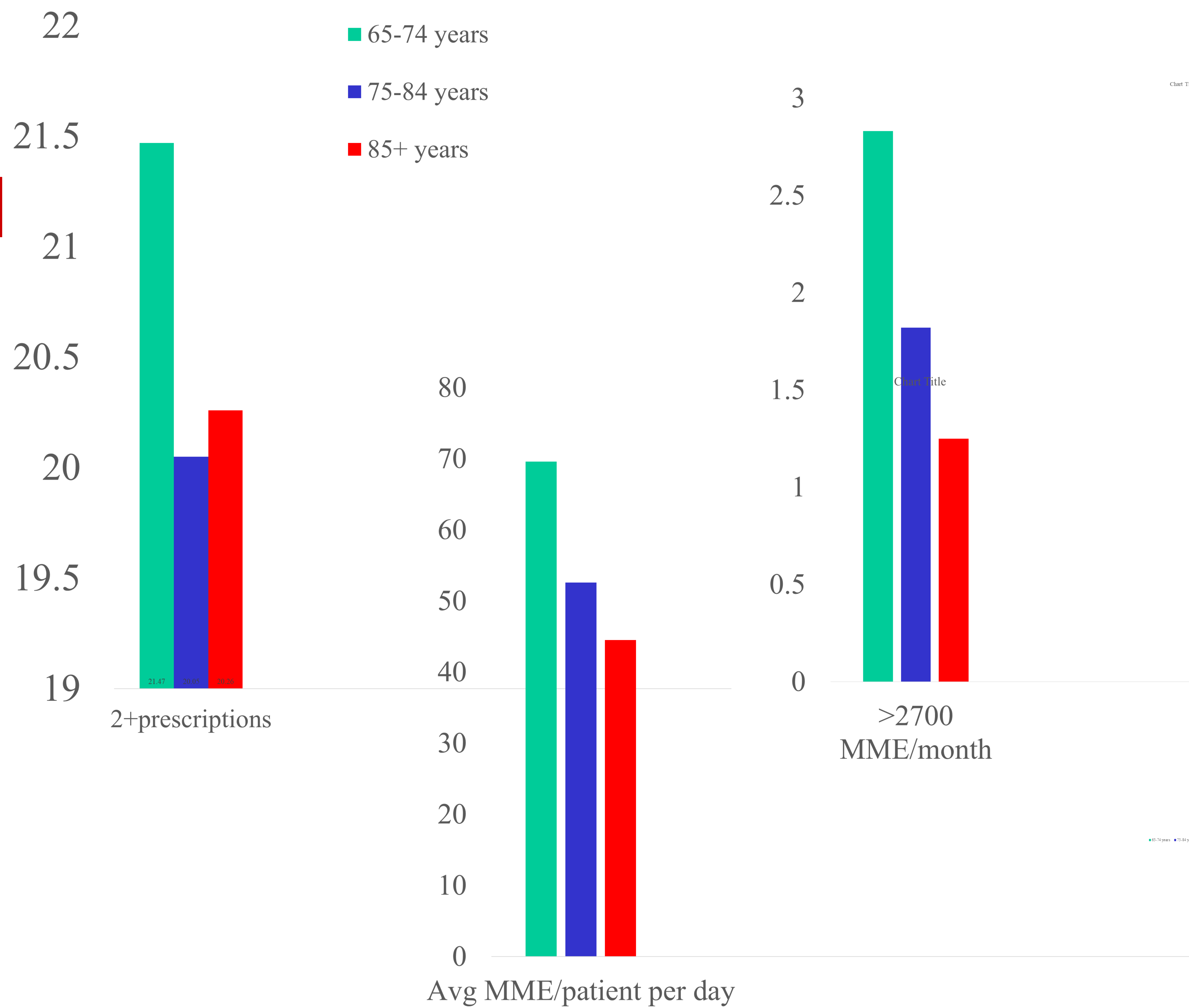
Methods

- Data from Illinois Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) from year 2022
- Adults 65 and older prescribed an opioid were included by age categories: 65 to 74, 75 to 84, and 85 years and older.
- Identified those with two or more opioid prescriptions in one month and those with prescriptions that exceeded 2700 MMEs/month (factors that may increase risk of falls).

Results

- 484,205 adults 65 years and older in Illinois received an opioid prescription in year 2022.

Age 65 – 74 (259,059)
Age 75 – 84 (154,663)
Age 85 + (70,483)



Results (cont.)

- Greater than 20% of older adults in Illinois received more than one opioid prescription in at least 1 month during 2022.
- This was consistent among all age categories.
- Less than 3% of older adults received prescription opioids that exceeded 2700 MME/month.
- This was also fairly consistent, but slightly higher in the 65-74 age group.

Conclusions

- More than 1 in 5 seniors in Illinois may be at increased risk for falls due to prescribing of multiple opioids.
- This is most concerning in the 85 and over age group, a population at very high risk for falls.
- Educational interventions to better appreciate risks related to opioid prescribing among seniors may be warranted.

References

- https://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/general/ACL_Issue_Brief_-_Opioid_Abuse_and_Older_Adults_-_Dec2017.pdf
- 2022 CDC Clinical Practice Guideline For Prescribing Opioids for Pain
- Guidelines from the American Geriatric Society Target Management of Chronic Pain in Older Persons