

# ` Quick Review of Model System Research

## The Intersection of Lifetime History of

## Traumatic Brain Injury and the Opioid Epidemic

### What is the study about?

### This commentary article aims to highlight the severity of the opioid epidemic and the potentially significant connection with lifetime history of traumatic brain injury (TBI). The authors suggest that TBI can have unrecognized consequences that may increase the risk for opioid use disorders (OUD). The factors discussed that can increase risk of opioid use disorder include: how TBI causes damage to the frontal cortex affecting the reward circuit in the brain, childhood TBI and links to substance use behavior in adolescence and adulthood, and having an illness along with TBI and needing pain medication. Additionally, the authors discuss how OUDs are likely a risk factor for future brain injury.

### What did the study find?

This commentary suggests that practitioners can help lessen the severity of the opioid epidemic. The authors reason that one way this can be done is by identifying high-risk populations through screening, including individuals with a lifetime history of TBI before deciding to prescribe opioids for pain. Also, treatment planning should include educational interventions and OUD treatment should accommodate weaknesses in cognitive abilities. The authors also state that more research is needed to identify non-pharmacological approaches to treating pain among people with TBI and suggest other similarly-related research topics.

### Who participated in the study?

This is a commentary article so there were no participants.

### How was the study conducted?

This is a commentary article so there were no study methods.

### How can people use the results?

### Individuals with TBI and their families can use the results of this commentary to better understand the connection between the opioid epidemic and TBI, and why TBI may increase the risk for opioid disorders. Practitioners can use this discussion to learn more about the potential connection between opioid use disorders and TBI. Practitioners can also use this article to think about how they can incorporate screening practices and educational interventions into their routine that are sensitive to liftime history of TBI, when considering prescribing opiods for pain.

### Reference

Corrigan, J.D., & Sayko Adams, R. (2019). The intersection of lifetime history of traumatic brain injury and the opioid epidemic. *Addictive Behaviors,* *90, 143-145*.

**Disclaimer**

The contents of this quick review were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant number 90DP0082). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this quick review do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.