ACUTE PAIN FLOW SHEET

FOR THE EVALUATION AND TREATMENT OF ACUTE PAIN

ASSESSMENT -

- Patient presents after an acute injury (trauma, surgical procedure).
 - Evaluate the clinical situation and determine your expected recovery time based on clinical evaluation, literature, your experience, and the patient's general condition.
 - Educate the patient regarding expectations for healing and duration and intensity of pain. Some pain is to be expected, and it will diminish over time.

NON-OPIOID OPTIONS -

- Advise appropriate behavioral modifications, for example, initial rest followed by graded exercise of the affected body area.
- Provide external pain-reducing modalities, for example, immobilization, heat/cold, and elevation.
- Advise appropriate OTC medications with specific medications, doses, and duration, as you would any pharmacologic modality.

OPIOID TREATMENT -

- If considering opioids, first ask about risks for opioid misuse, for example, previous addiction history, overdose history, and suicidality.
- If opioids are contraindicated, clearly state to the patient and document in the chart note that the risks of treatment overshadow the benefits. Stress other modalities of pain modification.
- When prescribing opioids, use the lowest possible dose for the shortest amount of time. Most acute painful situations will resolve themselves in three to seven days. In most cases, three days of opioids will be sufficient.

STOP AND REASSESS -

- If the patient asks for additional opioids, and you have prescribed the amount that in your professional judgment should have sufficed, have the patient return for an evaluation. At that follow up visit, you or your staff should:
 - Be sure there is no unforeseen complication requiring further testing or treatment.
 - Be sure there is no evidence of substance use complicating treatment. A PDMP query is advised and a UDS might be indicated at this time.
 - Only prescribe additional opioids if you feel it is clinically appropriate. Otherwise, continue to reinforce non-opioid modalities of pain control.

Green Light

Caution

Begin

Stop!