

Author Full Name : Rebekkah Morris**Received Date :** 01/13/2025 11:24 AM**Comments Received :**

I write to you today for myself, and for the many I have seen suffer due to the actions taken in the name of these guidelines. The 2016 CDC Opioid Prescribing Guidelines was a costly mistake that has irreparably harmed and stigmatized every vulnerable population in our country. They have stripped our healthcare system of its doctor-patient relationship and continue to prevent hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of sick patients from receiving life-saving, safe, and legal, opioid pain medication.

This prevents us from having a quality of life; it certainly prevents a fulfilling life without high levels of intractable pain and suffering. It has caused mental health decline, but it's also altered some patients physically, and permanently. Many have been subjected to and forced into harmful and painful procedures like steroid shots in the spine and other joints just to receive a minimal amount of medication. Many claim their doctors or insurance company require these shots that don't help in the very least, or make them even worse. How is that okay with you?

The opioid prescribing monitoring and grading system, as well as related monitoring techniques, is not only unnecessary but is also incredibly harmful, invasive, & gets in the way of quality patient care. It adds to the stigma we face, which is encouraged further with pain management contracts, random pill counts, and urinalysis (drug testing), treating innocent (and very sick) adults like criminals to receive access to their pain medications.

There's also been many who turned to the street, the black market or other methods for pain relief out of desperation after having their safe and effective opioid pain medication taken away. They have been harmed two-fold and deserve better. We all deserve better as hardworking American adults who should have a say in their own healthcare and the right to choose for themselves what pain treatment they receive.

These guidelines have caused thousands more to be inaccurately and inappropriately labeled as drug addicts. Many of us have been force-tapered or entirely removed from their therapeutic opioid pain medication, despite never misusing them. Some are switched to Suboxone in the name of "preventing addiction", but Suboxone has done nothing to help our pain and is not approved to treat pain. All it's done is labelled pain patients as addicts for the rest of their lives. They may never receive relief again. Suboxone is an entirely other conversation, with all the harm it's done in and of itself. But Suboxone - as well as the over-prescribing/selling of unnecessary naloxone to pain patients, and as a tactic to increase "opioid hysteria" in the general population - deserves to be mentioned here and should be considered as part of the whole situation.

I also have serious concerns regarding the intentions of those who promote these guidelines. Groups like PROP, ill-informed medical professionals, grieving families who may hold personal grudges against opioids or those who need them & other opioid-free zealots have worked hard to undercut the patients they harm with their rhetoric.

I'm a neurodivergent pain patient, and despite the popular belief, I'm extra sensitive to pain. I'm a cancer survivor and have Rheumatoid Arthritis, Tertiary Lyme Disease, nerve damage, and over twenty surgeries while being a mom to 4 special needs kids. These guidelines have negatively impacted me and it's vital they be removed completely! Thank you.