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Possible treatment-related harm requiring prompt assessment Opioid analgesia safety

Pharmacology-related Cases | Focused diagnosis-based template

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Fictional educational example. Individualize using verified patient findings, authorized treatment and current local protocols. No real patient record or observed outcome is claimed.

Clinical assessment

Subjective: Pain improves but he feels unusually sleepy.

Objective findings and required checks: Sedation and respiratory assessment are needed; consider other sedating medicines.

Physical examination and investigations: Review pain, sedation, respiratory rate/effort, oxygenation, renal function and medication timing.

Supply actual values, units, timing and trends during supervised application. Do not invent missing clinical data.

Clinical focus and pathophysiology

Opioid analgesia safety: Opioid receptor effects relieve pain but can depress breathing and impair alertness.

Medical / surgical management

Assess urgently if oversedated, follow authorized withholding/escalation instructions and maintain prescribed monitoring.

Illustrative drug and treatment study

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Medicine / treatment	Purpose	Nursing checks
Prescribed opioid	Treat assessed pain	Check formulation, dose order, sedation, breathing and bowel effects
naloxone when indicated	Reverse dangerous opioid effects	Use the emergency protocol and monitor for recurrent sedation.

Treatment examples are not a prescription. Verify the authorized product, dose, route, timing, contraindications and current local product information.

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Focused nursing-problem template

Nursing diagnoses use original clinical problem wording. They are not the licensed NANDA-I classification. Verify any formal label or code against your institution's licensed current edition; select actual or risk diagnoses only when supported by assessment.

Context task: Establish the immediate clinical priorities and verify the baseline before assuming a diagnosis.

Set individualized measurable targets and an exact review time. Select actual or risk statements only when supported by assessment.

Assessment: subjective / objective	Nursing diagnosis: original problem wording	Short- and longer-term goals	Nursing interventions with rationale	Evaluation
Ask: Ask about medicine names, timing, symptoms and non-prescribed products. Assess: Review observations, medication record and relevant drug-specific investigations.	Possible treatment-related harm requiring prompt assessment. Possible factors: adverse medication effects or an administration problem. Validate against the patient's assessment.	Short-term: At the next patient-specific reassessment: The suspected adverse event is escalated and no further avoidable exposure occurs. Longer-term: Before the clinically approved transition or agreed follow-up: Explains the revised medication plan and warning symptoms before discharge.	1. Assess airway, breathing, circulation and the time course of symptoms. Rationale: Serious adverse reactions require immediate stabilization. 2. Escalate suspected toxicity and follow the authorized hold, monitoring or antidote instructions. Rationale: Treatment decisions depend on the drug and clinical severity. 3. Document and communicate the reaction and reconcile the medicine list. Rationale: Accurate records reduce repeat exposure and support pharmacovigilance. 4. Assess urgently if oversedated, follow authorized withholding/escalation instructions and maintain prescribed monitoring. Rationale: Opioid receptor effects relieve pain but can depress breathing and impair alertness. The condition-specific plan addresses the underlying problem while response is monitored.	Record the baseline and reassessed finding, the time and whether this goal is met, partly met or not met. If not met, reassess causes and revise or escalate. Do not record an unobserved improvement.

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Apply this template

Complete with verified data: assessment cues; supported actual problem or risk; measurable outcome and review time; selected authorized interventions and rationale; observed response and next action.

Subjective / objective cues: _____

Patient-specific target and review time: _____

Evaluation evidence and next action: _____

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Health education and continuing care

Teach safe use, avoiding alcohol/unapproved sedatives, storage and not sharing medicines.

Transition only after clinical readiness is confirmed. Reconcile medicines, check access and caregiver support, and document who will review the patient and when.

Urgent warning signs

Slow or inadequate breathing, inability to wake, cyanosis or collapse is an emergency.

Evaluation and conclusion

For each goal, document met, partly met or not met using observed evidence and the review time. Reassess and revise if progress is inadequate. Individual assessment, prioritized care and coordinated review guide this topic.

Quick Revision

- Opioid receptor effects relieve pain but can depress breathing and impair alertness.
- Priority concerns: Possible treatment-related harm requiring prompt assessment.
- Slow or inadequate breathing, inability to wake, cyanosis or collapse is an emergency.
- Teach safe use, avoiding alcohol/unapproved sedatives, storage and not sharing medicines.

Exam / viva: What assessment evidence supports this problem, and what measurable result would demonstrate improvement?

References

Nursing Fundamentals, 2e - Ernstmeyer & Christman (editors), Open RN / WisTech Open, 2024
https://wtcs.pressbooks.pub/nursingfundamentals/

Nursing Pharmacology, 2e - Ernstmeyer & Christman (editors), Open RN / WisTech Open, 2023
https://wtcs.pressbooks.pub/pharmacology2e/

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B.Sc. Nursing curriculum and regulatory notifications - Indian Nursing Council

https://www.indiannursingcouncil.org/gazette-notification

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