



BREAKOUT SESSION

Post-Operative Pain Study (POPS)

Group Participant: Your role is to actively engage in the discussion, share your insights, and respect others' perspectives. Your active participation and constructive feedback are important.

Group Facilitator: Introduce yourself and facilitate a discussion of the study and implications to practice. Promote a space where all practitioners voice their opinion. Call on people directly, particularly if one person is dominating the conversation.

Group Recorder: Please record a summary of the group's discussion on the form provided and, in conjunction with the practitioner group leader, be prepared to summarize your group's findings.



Brief Study Review:

The Postoperative Pain Study (POPS) was designed to better understand patients' real-world experiences of pain following common dental procedures using a mobile health (mHealth) platform. The study aimed to characterize the trajectory of postoperative pain intensity and functional interference during the first week after treatment, identify procedure types and patient factors associated with higher levels of pain, and evaluate how mHealth technology can be used to collect and act on patient-reported outcomes in dental practice.

Data from more than 2,600 patients across 144 dental practitioners showed that, on average, postoperative pain decreased steadily over time for most procedures, with pain levels generally low by day 7. Surgical procedures—particularly multiple surgical treatments, periodontal surgery, implants, and surgical extractions—were associated with higher odds of moderate to severe pain and greater interference with daily activities such as eating and speaking. Higher pain levels were more likely among younger patients, those with preoperative pain or postoperative swelling, females, and patients with lower income. Most patients relied on non-opioid pain medications, while opioid use was relatively uncommon. Importantly, dentists tended to overestimate patients' short-term postoperative pain, although predictions were more accurate for longer-term pain.

Overall, the study demonstrates that mHealth platforms are a feasible and valuable tool for capturing longitudinal patient-reported pain outcomes, improving patient-practitioner communication, and informing clinical decision-making. These findings highlight opportunities to better align pain management expectations, reduce unnecessary opioid prescribing, and use real-time patient data to tailor postoperative care in dental practice.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Based on the data from the POPS study, what insights do you find most surprising or informative?

2. How would the study results impact your approach to post-operative pain management?

3. How do you think utilizing a platform like FollowApp.Care could inform your approach to prescribing pain medication after dental procedures?

4. What are some additional research questions related to post-operative pain management that you are interested in exploring?
