Post-op pain may often be underrated by inpatient staff

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(HealthDay)—Postoperative pain is frequently underrated when assessed by nursing staff on wards, according to a study published online July 14 in *PAIN Practice*.

Andrea van Ransbeeck, from the University Hospital Zurich, and colleagues systematically assessed pain scores in a 900-bed university hospital to examine whether routine pain assessment is accurate and reproducible. Patients were interviewed using the PAIN OUT questionnaires during a three-month period. Nursing staff on the wards assessed pain scores and compared them with PAIN OUT data. Data were included for 658 postoperative patients.

The researchers found that within the first 24 hours on the ward, pain scores were significantly lower in routine pain measurements than in PAIN OUT questionnaires. As pain scores increased, this difference increased. In the hospital in which the study was performed, the quality of pain management ranged around the 50th percentile compared with similar centers.

"Inadequately treated postoperative pain can lead to longer healing processes, longer hospital stays and the development of chronic pain," the authors write. "All staff dealing with pain patients have to be sensitized and trained on the topic."

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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