In the March issue of Disease of the Colon & Rectum, surgeons from Austria discuss postoperative pain control following one of the most extensive operations performed for pelvic cancer. In vivo, where many studies have shown that patients do better after surgery with use of lower amounts of opioid pain medications, this can be particularly challenging in those patients who have taken a significant amount of pain medication before surgery. This is exactly what was shown in this study. In a group of 99 patients undergoing the very extensive procedure of pelvic exenteration, an operation in which all pelvic organs are removed usually for advanced rectal, gynecologic, or urologic cancers, one-third of patients were already taking opioid medications for pain control preoperatively. The investigators were able to show that it is more difficult to control pain during their hospital stay within those patients.