Surgeons are one of the highest prescribers of opioid medication. Variations in prescribing practices within institutions have been observed.

Are there regional and national variations across the United States in opioid prescription practices after common orthopaedic procedures?

Retrospective study from 2015 and 2016

Data on 73,921 subjects from Truven Health MarketScan database who underwent common orthopaedic procedures

Initial opioid prescription

90-day prescription (initial + refills)

• Median oral morphine equivalent
• Interquartile range

There was high regional variability in prescriptions for all procedures, except total joint arthroplasty

Patients undergoing total joint arthroplasty required the most refills

Regions most affected by the opioid epidemic have the smallest prescriptions

The knowledge of variability in opioid prescriptions across the United States can be used to improve guidelines to reduce excess prescription.