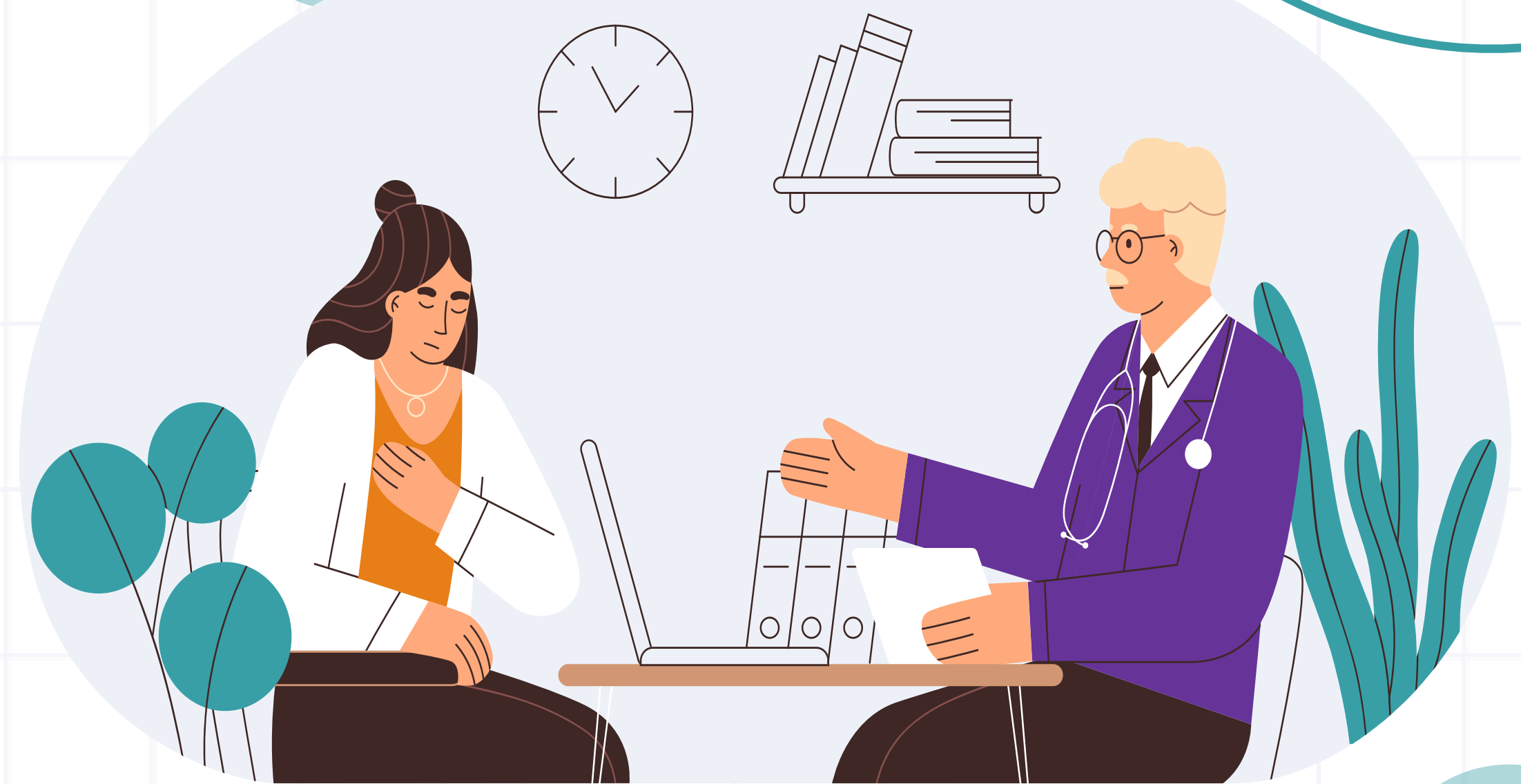


SCREENING SPECIAL POPULATIONS

for Prescription Opioid Misuse

You should screen all patients for substance use with a validated screening tool. Getting a complete picture of a patient's risk involves more than just screening...



1 Know your patients

(✓) Assess for 'Total Pain'

Understanding how a patient is experiencing pain in many forms, including physical and emotional, will give you a more complete picture of their risk for opioid misuse.

(✓) Take social and sexual histories

As part of your screening and patient history taking, you should also be taking detailed and inclusive social and sexual histories. This can help you gather important health behavior information, as well as ascertain whether your patient identifies as part of certain higher-risk communities.

(✓) Check for co-occurring conditions

Many conditions, like depression and anxiety, can greatly increase a patient's risk for substance use disorder, including prescription opioid misuse.

(✓) Check your biases

Certain populations are often overlooked when it comes to substance use screening. For instance, providers have historically considered opioid misuse to be a low priority in palliative medicine and hospice care. But opioid misuse can have a significant impact on quality of life, both during and after treatment for serious illness.

2 Know your tools*

(✓) Assess your own practice setting

Screening can be done in every healthcare setting, but may look different in different practices. Established practices may have specific screening and assessment tools built into their protocols or EHRs. If your practice does not, consider suggesting it.

(✓) Learn the differences between tools

Identify the tools that work best for unique circumstances. Different screening tools work best for certain substances, age ranges, and method of administration.

(✓) Go beyond "screening" tools

Utilize other tools that might give you information not included in screenings.

- Check your state's prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP) to see if a patient has any current or recent prescriptions for medications that might impact your treatment plan.
- Drug and toxicology tests can be used to identify the use of specific substances that may inform a patient's risk of misuse. Follow proper informed consent procedures for all testing.

3 Tailor your approach

(✓) Pick the most appropriate tools

Once you have familiarized yourself with different screening tools, choose the one that will be most appropriate for your practice setting and your patient. It may not be the same one each time.

(✓) Establish trust

Patients from many populations may have a distrust of medical establishments. Remember the importance of building trust with your patient to ensure honest communication about opioid use. It is vital that your patients feel safe, respected, and supported in these situations.

(✓) Consider confidentiality

Statistically, adolescents are less likely to be open to medical management when they perceive that healthcare services are not confidential. Make sure they understand the limits of provider-patient confidentiality and how you plan to involve parents or caregivers. State laws may apply.

4 Prepare for next steps

Check for OUD treatment services in your area.

Continue to screen patients throughout treatment.

Offer alternatives to opioids for patients who may be at higher risk for misuse.

Always follow up with patients who are using, or misusing, opioids.

Consider specialists for help with pain management in certain populations.

Talk with your patient about their screening results, and create a treatment plan together.

Remember: Screening does not yield a formal diagnosis!

* Visit nida.nih.gov/nidamed-medical-health-professionals/screening-tools-resources/chart-screening-tools for a guide to evidence-based screening and assessment tools you can use with your patients



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