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New AAOS public service campaigns tackle opioid misuse, childhood obesity

San Diego, Calif. (March 17, 2018)—The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) today unveiled its 2017 public service campaigns (PSAs) during the organization’s [2017 Annual Meeting](#): one focusing on prescription safety and the dangers of opioid misuse, and the other on the vital role of families in promoting child exercise and bone health.

The PSAs were distributed to more than 5,000 media, including television and radio stations, print publications, and outdoor billboard/sign companies.

“These campaigns tackle two societal epidemics that are threatening the nation’s orthopaedic and overall health,” said incoming AAOS President William J. Maloney, MD. “Childhood obesity has lifelong effects on musculoskeletal health, and the overprescribing and misuse of opioid pain medications has led to devastating consequences.”

AAOS 2017 PSA campaign details

Prescription safety

Numerous studies and alarming data have exposed the addictive dangers of opioid misuse. In fact, the United States is in the midst of an opioid epidemic, with millions of people dependent on or addicted to prescription painkillers such as codeine, morphine, oxycodone, tramadol, hydrocodone or oxycodone. A 2016 Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation survey found that one in three (34 percent) of patients who recently took opioids for at least two months reported being addicted or dependent on the drugs. In addition, patients taking opioids prior to surgery have greater post-surgical pain, and face a higher risk of pneumonia, over-sedation and even death.

To highlight the potential dangers of opioids, AAOS has launched a multimedia campaign that includes print and radio ads, urging doctors and patients to exercise caution in prescribing and taking opioids. The AAOS print ad says: "Painkillers are easy to get into. Hard to escape," with the image of a man trapped inside a prescription bottle. The ad was distributed to the companies that own and represent hundreds of outdoor media signs and displays throughout the U.S.

(PRINT PSA IMAGE)

The 30- and 60-second radio spots, created in partnership with the [Orthopaedic Trauma Association](#), emphasize the importance of moderation in prescribing opioids. Both radio ads feature a patient asking for additional prescription pain killers to combat knee pain. Her orthopaedic surgeon responds: “We’re being very careful with prescription painkillers. Let’s continue with therapy and off-the-shelf anti-inflammatories for now.”

(BUTTON FOR RADIO AD)

The ad concludes with the message: “Prescription painkillers are America’s newest epidemic causing abuse and addiction for millions. The smaller the dose prescribed and taken, the better.”

“Having open lines of communication between surgeon and patient regarding the use of prescription opioid or narcotic pain medications has never been so important,” said OTA President Steven Olson, MD. “OTA members recognize that injuries can be painful, often requiring short term, controlled use of opioid medications. However, opioid medications are nearly always provided as one piece of the overall strategy to treat pain. Other medications such as acetaminophen and/or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, as well as other modalities such as ice, heat, and exercise are just as important.”

“It is our responsibility to educate and advise our patients as to how they can manage their pain and how to properly use opioid pain medications,” said Dr. Olson. “We encourage patients to take the responsibility for carefully following these instructions to lessen the risk of harm and addiction.”

The radio and print ads direct patients to the Academy’s patient information website for more information: OrthoInfo.org/PrescriptionSafety.

Active families

Exercise and activity during childhood, along with a nutritious diet, are critical for building strong bones and maintaining a healthy body weight—not just in childhood, but for life. In fact, the more bone mass created during childhood and adolescence the greater the chance of preventing osteoporosis (brittle and weak bones) and related fractures later in life.

(SCREEN SHOT OF VIDEO)

Unfortunately, video games, technology, screen time and busy schedules are resulting in fewer opportunities for exercise in today’s children and adolescents.

To emphasize the need for kids to stay healthy and active, AAOS and the [Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America \(POSNA\)](http://PediatricOrthopaedicSocietyofNorthAmerica.org) created a new video ad distributed to television stations throughout the U.S. that humorously features grandparents introducing various outdoor activities to their technology-focused grandson. The video is funny, but also sends an important message: Parents, grandparents and families can play an important role in encouraging healthy behaviors in children.

“You’re going to love your new birthday present. Are you ready?” a grandfather says as he uncovers his grandson’s eyes in the new video. “It’s a teeter totter.”

The child looks unimpressed and returns to his electronic game. Eventually, after several funny and unsuccessful attempts to introduce outdoor activities to their grandson, the grandparents take him to the park for a walk. The video ends with the boy and a new friend on the teeter totter with the reminder: “For strong bones, activity runs in the family.” For more information, viewers are directed to OrthoInfo.org/ActiveFamilies.

“Children are more likely to be healthy and active if their parents and family are active,” said POSNA Communications Council Chair Jennifer M. Weiss, MD. “People of all ages are encouraged to spend at least 45 minutes a day engaging in physical activity. This is important for our heart and lungs, but also for our bone and muscle strength. Creating this habit early in life leads to healthier body weight, and a

lower risk of bone problems throughout life. Active children are less likely to be obese, and obesity can lead to bone problems like slipped hips, crooked legs, and trouble healing broken bones.

“So get up, get out, and get moving as a family!” said Dr. Weiss.

“These campaigns provide important reminders to our patients and their families about two prevalent health risks that are adversely affecting millions of Americans,” said Dr. Maloney. “We’re also pleased that POSNA and OTA have joined us in promoting these important messages.”

[The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons](#)

With more than 39,000 members, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) is the world’s largest association of musculoskeletal specialists. The AAOS provides education programs for orthopaedic surgeons and allied health professionals, champions and advances the highest musculoskeletal care for patients, and is the authoritative source of information on bone and joint conditions, treatments, and related issues.

Visit AAOS at:

Newsroom.aaos.org for bone and joint health news, stats, facts, images and interview requests.

ANationinMotion.org for inspirational patient stories, and orthopaedic surgeon tips on maintaining bone and joint health, avoiding injuries, treating musculoskeletal conditions and navigating recovery.

Orthoinfo.org for patient information on hundreds of orthopaedic diseases and conditions.

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