

Reduction of opioid dose may improve pain, quality of life

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(HealthDay)—Reductions in opioid dosing might improve pain and function, as well as boost quality of life, according to a report published online July 18 in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

The review by Joseph Frank, M.D., a [primary care physician](#) at Denver's Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and colleagues included 67 studies on reducing or discontinuing [opioid therapy](#) prescribed for chronic pain. Forty of those studies looked specifically at how patients did when their medication dose was lowered.

The researchers found improvement in [pain severity](#), function, and quality of life. The team said, however, that the quality of the evidence in the studies was very low.

"In most studies in this review, opioid tapering involved slowly decreasing the dose of the medications over time, while working closely with a team of pain experts and using multiple non-opioid pain treatments," Frank told *HealthDay*.

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