

General

Real-World Trends in COX-2 Inhibitor Use in Pain Management

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A recent 16-month retrospective observational study evaluated prescribing patterns of celecoxib, a cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2) selective nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), within a pain management practice. The analysis compared celecoxib prescriptions with those of other commonly used NSAIDs, including ibuprofen, meloxicam, naproxen, and diclofenac, written by pain physicians between January 2023 and April 2024. The study demonstrated a marked increase in celecoxib prescribing over time, with significantly higher utilization compared with nonselective NSAIDs. By the final study interval, celecoxib prescriptions exceeded the combined total of all other NSAID prescriptions, suggesting a clear shift in clinician preference toward COX-2 selective therapy. The authors attributed this trend to celecoxib's favorable gastrointestinal safety profile and comparable analgesic efficacy. Importantly, this study provides real-world prescribing data, underscoring the growing reliance on COX-2 inhibitors in chronic pain management while highlighting the need for continued evaluation of long-term safety as prescribing patterns evolve. An infographic summarizing the key findings of the study is provided.

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