

Appendix 11: Sensitivity analyses* of opioids versus other drugs for pain relief

| Characteristics | No. of studies | No. of patients | Random SMD (95% CI) | I ² , % |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| All studies with available data for meta-analysis | 8 | 1079 | -0.05 (-0.32 to 0.21) | 62.7 |
| Medication taken by control group | | | | |
| Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) | 6 | 935 | 0.01 (-1.28 to 0.30) | 56.6 |
| Tricyclic antidepressants | 2 | 144 | -0.27 (-0.59 to 0.06) | 0.0 |
| Type of opioid | | | | |
| Strong* (oxycodone, morphine) | 2 | 146 | -0.34 (-0.67 to -0.01) | 0.0 |
| Weak (propoxyphene, codeine, tramadol) | 6 | 933 | 0.08 (-0.16 to 0.33) | 41.5 |
| Methodological quality of study | | | | |
| High (scores of 3-5) | 6 | 1035 | -0.01 (-0.29 to 0.28) | 67.6 |
| Low (scores of 1 or 2) | 2 | 44 | -0.34 (-0.94 to 0.26) | 0.0 |

Note: SMD = standardized mean differences, CI = confidence interval. I² is a test of heterogeneity (higher values mean more heterogeneous).

*Results in this table are statistically *nonsignificant* except for those for strong opioids.