Opioid Efficacy for Chronic Pain

Meta-analyses (3-6 m f/u)
- Opioids vs placebo (high quality studies)
  Opioids with statistically significant, but small, improvements in pain\(^1,2\) and physical functioning\(^2\)
- Opioids vs nonopioids (low-mod quality studies)
  Similar benefits\(^2\)

RCT\(^3\) found opioids not superior to nonopioids for improving musculoskeletal pain-related function over 12 months

Limitations to generalizability:\(^4\)
- Excluded patients already on long-term opioids
- 89% of eligible patients declined to be enrolled

Two longer term follow-up studies found 44.3% on chronic opioids for chronic pain had at least 50% pain relief \(^5\)

Source: SCOPE of Pain – Safer/Competent Opioid Prescribing.