

Table 4-13: An Approach to Pain Management in Substance Users with HIV Disease

1. Substance users with HIV disease deserve pain control; we have an obligation to treat pain and suffering in all of our patients.
2. Accept and respect the report of pain.
3. Be careful about the label *substance abuse*; distinguish between tolerance, physical dependence and addiction (psychological dependence or drug abuse).
4. Not all substance users are the same; distinguish between active users, individuals in methadone maintenance, and those in recovery.
5. Individualize pain treatment.
6. Utilize the principles of pain management outlined for all patients with HIV disease and pain (WHO Ladder).
7. Set clear goals and conditions for opioid therapy: set limits, recognize drug abuse behaviors, make consequences clear, use written contracts and establish a single prescriber.
8. Use a multidimensional approach: pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic interventions, attention to psychosocial issues, team approach.