

■ **The management of postoperative pain in intensive-care units (ICUs) in Italy is inadequate**, say researchers from that country.* Their study was conducted in 128 ICUs and included 661 patients who underwent surgery. It was found that 36% of patients did not receive any analgesic drug during the first 2 postoperative days; 51% received at least one opioid analgesic during that period, of which fentanyl was the most commonly used agent. Among patients who received at least one opioid analgesic, 42% received only a single bolus of drug per day. Patients who were comatose were less likely than other patients to receive an opioid analgesic during the first 2 postoperative days.

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Bertolini G, et al. The use of analgesic drugs in postoperative patients: the neglected problem of pain control in intensive care units. An observational, prospective, multicenter study in 128 Italian intensive care units. *European Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* 58: 73-77, Apr 2002 800905544