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Introduction:
The use of methadone as a potent analgesic has been gaining ground in the intensive care setting, such as where it is possible to properly select the group of patients who will benefit from the drug, as well as monitoring of possible complications. The objective of this study is to evaluate the safety of the use of methadone in critically ill patients in a large hospital.

Methods:
A retrospective analysis of all patients who used methadone in a neurological intensive care unit for a period of four months and the results were evaluated.

Results:
In the four-month period, 52 patients used methadone during intensive care. 65% of the patients were male, with a medical age of 59.7 ± 17.4 years. The main indication for the use of the medication was for analgesia in patients who were weaned from mechanical ventilation. The mean time of use was 6.1 days. In all cases evaluated, analgesia was effective, with methadone being used alone or in combination with other drugs, according to an institutional protocol.
Among the complications found, 20 patients presented hypotension (38%); 20 presented bradycardia (38%); 15 presented constipation (29%); 4 had excessive sedation (8%) and 7 had other complications. All complications were reversible. 10 patients of the studied population died, however, without correlation with the use of methadone.

Conclusion:
The use of methadone, in the studied group, was effective in the control of analgesia, with no impact on patient safety when used in a monitored way.