Table 3

How to manage medication overuse headache

- Warn patients about the risks of medication overuse headache (MOH) before starting acute treatment
- Limit acute treatment to 2 days per week to prevent MOH
- Avoid opioids where possible as acute treatments
- Most patients with MOH can be managed as outpatients
- A no blame approach should be used
- The management strategy should be individualised
- Abrupt withdrawal alone, abrupt withdrawal and immediate introduction of a preventative, introduction of a preventative without withdrawal are all effective strategies
- Opioids should be withdrawn gradually
- Patients should be warned to expect transient worsening of headache frequency and intensity associated with medication withdrawal