

Crime Prevention News

To Enhance the Safety of Faculty, Staff and Students

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OXYCONTIN

OxyContin is a prescription pain medicine that is used in the treatment of pain related to cancer and other debilitating conditions. OxyContin contains the drug

500,000 initiates per year. Among youth age 12–17, the incidence rate increased from 6.3 per 1,000 potential new users in 1990 to 32.4 per 1,000 potential new users in 1998. For young adults age 18–25, there was also an increase in the rate of first use between 1990 and 1998 (from 7.7 to 20.3 per 1,000 potential new users).

*Example of
Oxycontin.*

oxycodone, which is a common drug used in pain relievers such as Percocet and Percodan; however, OxyContin contains a higher concentration of oxycodone.

OxyContin is a time-released drug designed to be taken orally. OxyContin abusers often chew the tablets or crush the tablets and snort the powder. Because oxycodone is water soluble, crushed tablets can also be dissolved in water and then injected. The latter two methods lead to the rapid release and absorption of oxycodone. Oxycodone is a derivative of opium and the effects of its use are similar to heroin. The drug is a central nervous system depressant, with possible effects being analgesia, respiratory depression, and euphoria.

The illegal use of OxyContin, as well as other prescription drugs, has increased recently. The 1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) showed that approximately 9% of the U.S. population (19.9 million people) have used pain relievers illegally in their lifetime. An estimated 1.6 million Americans used prescription-type pain relievers non-medically for the first time in 1998. This represents a significant increase since the 1980s, when there were generally fewer than

Indicators used to produce the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) study show that the abuse of oxycodone, the active ingredient in the pain medication OxyContin has increased greatly in recent years. The number of oxycodone emergency department mentions increased from 3,369 in first half (January–June) of 1999 to 5,261 in the first half of 2000. The total number of emergency department

mentions for Oxycodone in 1999 (6,429) was up from 3,190 mentions in 1996. The DAWN study also measures reports of drug-related deaths from 139 medical examiners in 40 metropolitan areas. In 1999 there were 262 mentions of oxycodone-related deaths, up from 49 mentions in 1996 that were reported by 146 ME's in 41 metropolitan areas.

Law enforcement sources have reported an increase in the diversion of OxyContin and other medications containing oxycodone. This increase in illegal use has been especially apparent on the East Coast. The increase in the abuse of OxyContin has led to an increased number of pharmacy robberies and health care fraud incidents.

Common street terms for OxyContin are "Oxy" and "OC". *(3).

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OxyContin first came to the attention of law enforcement in the sparsely inhabited area of Appalachia. The drug quickly moved north and is currently establishing itself throughout the eastern part of the U.S.

Oxycodone is synthesized from thebaine. It is similar to codeine, but is more potent and has a higher dependence potential. It is effective orally and is marketed in combination with aspirin (Percodan) or acetaminophen (Percocet) for the relief of pain. Designed as time-release tablets, addicts and other users take the tablets and crush them into powder and take the drug orally or dissolve it in water, filter out the insoluble material, and “mainline” the active drug which no longer has a time-release feature.

July, 2001 - after a rash of armed robberies at pharmacies by drug dealers and users looking for OxyContin, officials at some New England supermarket chains said they will stop stocking the drug in its pharmacies in an effort to protect its customers and employees from potential harm. Effects of OxyContin are similar to heroin or morphine. (Euphoria, sleepy, tired) One pharmacist described OxyContin as a drug that is as close to heroin as you can get.

OxyContin is a respiratory depressant. When used with other depressants like alcohol or other depressant drugs you have the accumulative effect makes which causes your breathing to stop, cardiovascular system stops functioning, your heart stops and then you die. As of August 2001, Purdue Pharma LP, the distributor of OxyContin advised that they are modifying the drug so that if the tablets are crushed a chemical will neutralize the narcotic effect. The science behind this has not been released. *(3)

In Philadelphia 22 deaths have been linked to Oxycodone in a 3 month period. Oxycodone-related deaths are on the rise across the nation and the deaths in Philadelphia have skyrocketed from 17 in 1999 to 41 in 2000 and already 40 as of 6/27/01. Basically OXYCONTIN especially when chewed/snorted lowers a persons respiration rate and if enough OXY is taken or if it combines with a HUGE LIST of other medications it can EASILY kill you by lowering your respirations until you eventually stop breathing. *(2)

OXYCONTIN is one of several OPIUM derivatives available by prescription. It is a high potency pain killer that comes in time release tablets that last for 12 hours. When used as prescribed it helps cancer patients and chronic pain sufferers manage their pain.

Street Names:

OXY, OXY's, OXIES, OXYCOTTON, OC's, KILLERS, OCEANS, O's, OXYCOFFINS, Hillbilly Heroin.

Side Effects:

Slow breathing, seizures, dizziness, weakness, loss of consciousness, coma, confusion, tiredness, COLD and CLAMMY SKIN and SMALL PUPILS.

Overdose:

Everyone's body is different but as little as half a pill when combined with alcohol or other depressants can lower your respiratory system enough to kill you. Taken in high doses OXYCONTIN alone can kill you. *(2)

Sources: *(2):oxyabusekills.com *(3): www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov



www.uiowa.edu/~pubsfy