



TRAINING BULLETIN

Los Angeles Police Department

Bernard C. Parks, Chief of Police

Volume XXXIII, Issue 10

December 2001

“OXYCONTIN®”

OxyContin® is a high potency, time-released narcotic analgesic (pain reliever). It is a semi-synthetic derivative of opium alkaloid with reactions similar to those of morphine. OxyContin® is prescribed for pain relief to people who have undergone surgery or have sustained serious injuries. It acts on the brain to decrease the feeling of pain as well as to reduce the emotional response to pain. This Training Bulletin presents information on the identification, packaging and effects of OxyContin® usage.

BACKGROUND

OxyContin®, an opiate agonist, is a trade name product for the generic narcotic oxycodone hydrochloride. The trade name is comprised of the prefix “Oxy” for oxycodone and “Contin” for continuous release. OxyContin® is an oral, time-released oxycodone that acts for 12 hours, making it the highest concentrated and longest lasting oxycodone on the market. Precocet®, Percodan®, and Tylox® are other trade names for oxycodone produced with a lesser narcotic concentration and without the time-release property of OxyContin®.

Opiate agonists provide pain relief by acting on opiod receptors in the spinal cord, brain, and possibly in the tissues directly. Opioids, natural or synthetic, are classes of drugs that act like morphine and are the most effective pain relievers available. Oxycodone is manufactured by modifying thebaine, an alkaloid found in opium, which has a high abuse potential.

Physicians commonly prescribe OxyContin® as a pain reliever for moderate to severe pain. It is particularly effective with severe and chronic pain treatment due to its high potency and time release qualities. It is generally prescribed for pain relief associated with injuries, bursitis, dislocation, fractures, neuralgia, arthritis, lower back and cancer pain. It is also used post-operatively and for pain relief after childbirth. The pill is designed with a time-release action in order to distribute the potency over a period of twelve hours. Addicts will remove the time-release coating by chewing or crushing the pills. Once removed, the typical duration of effects is approximately 3 – 4 hours.

Due to its similarities with morphine and the fact that it is an opiate derivative, it is popular with individuals who are addicted to heroin. It will help suppress the withdrawals for those individuals who are chemically dependent on heroin or other narcotic analgesics.

<p>Identifying Characteristics</p>	<p>The pharmaceutical pills are available in strengths that range from 10 – 160 milligrams. They are color-coded and imprinted on the obverse side with the letters “OC” and the reverse side with the number of milligrams – 10, 20, etc.</p>											
<p>Color and Potency And Identifying Names</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Color</td> <td>Potency per mg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>White</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pink</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yellow</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Blue</td> <td>80 or 160</td> </tr> </table>	Color	Potency per mg	White	10	Pink	20	Yellow	40	Blue	80 or 160	<p>Trade/Product Name: OxyContin®</p> <p>Street/Slang: Oxy, O.C., Killer, Oxy-cottins, Blue Bombers, Poor Man’s Heroin, Oxy-coffins</p> <p>Generic/Chemical Name: Oxycondon, 14-hydrox 7, 8-dihydrocodeinone</p>
Color	Potency per mg											
White	10											
Pink	20											
Yellow	40											
Blue	80 or 160											
<p>Packaging Methods</p>	<p>The pharmaceutical pills are typically packaged in clear plastic bags, or they may be contained in a pharmaceutical bottle or vial.</p>											
<p>Common Method of Use</p>	<p>Abusers of OxyContin® remove the time-release coating by either chewing or crushing the pills. Once the coating has been removed, a very potent single dose can be derived by swallowing, snorting the powder, or by injecting a solution made from dissolving the powder in water. The injection method has proved to be highly addictive and sometimes fatal.</p>											
<p>Signs and Symptoms of Being Under the Influence</p>	<p>Physical Effects of Narcotic Analgesics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constricted pupils (less than 3.0 mm) • Little or no visible reaction to light • Sedation or drowsy appearance • Slow and deliberate movements • Slow, low and raspy speech • Depressed vital signs • Slowed reflexes • Dry mouth • Droopy eyelids (ptosis) • Cool skin 											
<p>Street Price</p>	<p>The street price for OxyContin® is approximately one dollar per milligram. This is due to the wide variation in strengths of pills (10 – 160 mg). A white pill (10mg) would sell on the street for \$10 and a pink pill (20mg) would sell for \$20. However, as with most street drug sales, the more quantity ordered and the better the connection, the better the price.</p>											
<p>Health and Safety (H&S) Sections</p>	<p>This is a Schedule II controlled substance in California. It listed as 11055(b), (1), (N) under Health and Safety Code. It is legally available in pill form from a physician.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11350 H&S – possession without a valid prescription • 11351 H&S – possession for the purpose of sale or purchased for the purpose of sale • 11352 H&S – importing, selling, or furnishing • 11550 H&S – under the influence 											