**Title:** Non-medical Use of Tapentadol Immediate Release by College Students  
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**Article-Introduction:**

**Objectives:** Prescription opioid analgesics play an important role in managing moderate to severe pain. An unintended consequence of the availability of these drugs is non-medical use. We report rates and methods of non-medical use of the analgesic tapentadol immediate release (IR) and other commonly prescribed opioid analgesics among US college students following the launch of tapentadol IR in June 2009.

**Methods:** The Researched Abuse, Diversion and Addiction-Related Surveillance (RADARS®) System College Survey Program collects data from approximately 2,000 self-identified college students throughout the United States during fall, spring, and summer terms using a web-based questionnaire. Responses from July 2009 through September 2011 were analyzed for the rate of non-medical use of tapentadol IR.

**Results:** Non-medical use of prescription opioids was reported by 1,626 of 13,514 respondents (12.0%); tapentadol IR use was reported by 101 respondents (0.7%). The rate of non-medical tapentadol IR use per 100,000 population was highest in 4Q2009 (0.013 per 100,000 population) and decreased over the subsequent 2 years to 0.004 per 100,000 population. Similarly, the rate per 1,000 unique recipients of dispensed drug (URDD) was highest in 4Q2009 (0.66 per 1,000 URDD) and decreased to 0.06 per 1,000 URDD. The primary route of administration endorsed for non-medical tapentadol IR use was intact swallow (49.5%), chewed and swallowed (41.6%), followed by inhalation (20.8).

**Discussion:** Since its launch, rates of non-medical tapentadol IR use by college students have been low and have decreased over time. The initial levels of reported non-medical use may represent a brief period of experimentation after introduction.

**Key words (3-5):** tapentadol, non-medical use, college students, opioids, RADARS System