

# Use of Opiates to Get High in Patients Seeking Opiate Addiction Treatment: Europe and the U.S.

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## Background

- Individuals seeking treatment for opioid dependence are a valuable source of information, particularly about their recent drug misuse.
- As part of a European pilot study in 4 countries and an ongoing surveillance program in the United States (US), we aim to describe recent drug misuse in these populations.

## Methods

- The EUROPAD Pilot Study was an international multi-center observational research project aimed to assess overall rates of prescription drug misuse utilizing drug product mentions collected on standardized questionnaires from patients who sought treatment for opioid dependence. Patients entering opioid treatment centers in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain aged 18 to 65 years provided information about their recent use of prescription drugs to "get high."
- The RADARS<sup>®</sup> System Opioid Treatment Program is an established surveillance program in the US where participating centers also query participants at intake about their recent drug use.
- Data presented were collected from first quarter 2012 through third quarter 2013.

## Results

- The number and percent of respondents endorsing past 30-day use to "get high" within each country by drug class are presented in Table 1.
- In all four European countries and the US heroin is the most used drug to "get high" in the past 30 days. Methadone is the second most reported drug used to "get high" in Germany and Spain while buprenorphine is ranked second in France and Italy.
- The percentage of patients endorsing past 30-day use of fentanyl to "get high" appears higher in Germany than in all other countries studied.
- Oxycodone, methylphenidate, hydrocodone, and hydromorphone were endorsed by less than 2% of participating respondents in all four European countries. Conversely, in the US oxycodone and hydrocodone are the two most frequently endorsed prescription opioids with tapentadol being the only drug with less than 2% endorsing past 30-day use to "get high."

## Limitations

- Low past 30-day use numbers for Spain may be due to patient transfers from other treatment centers. To address this, another question has been added to the EUROPAD Program survey to understand this better.
- As the EUROPAD study was a pilot, fewer treatment sites were recruited than in the US, leading to higher numbers of respondents in the US.

## Conclusions

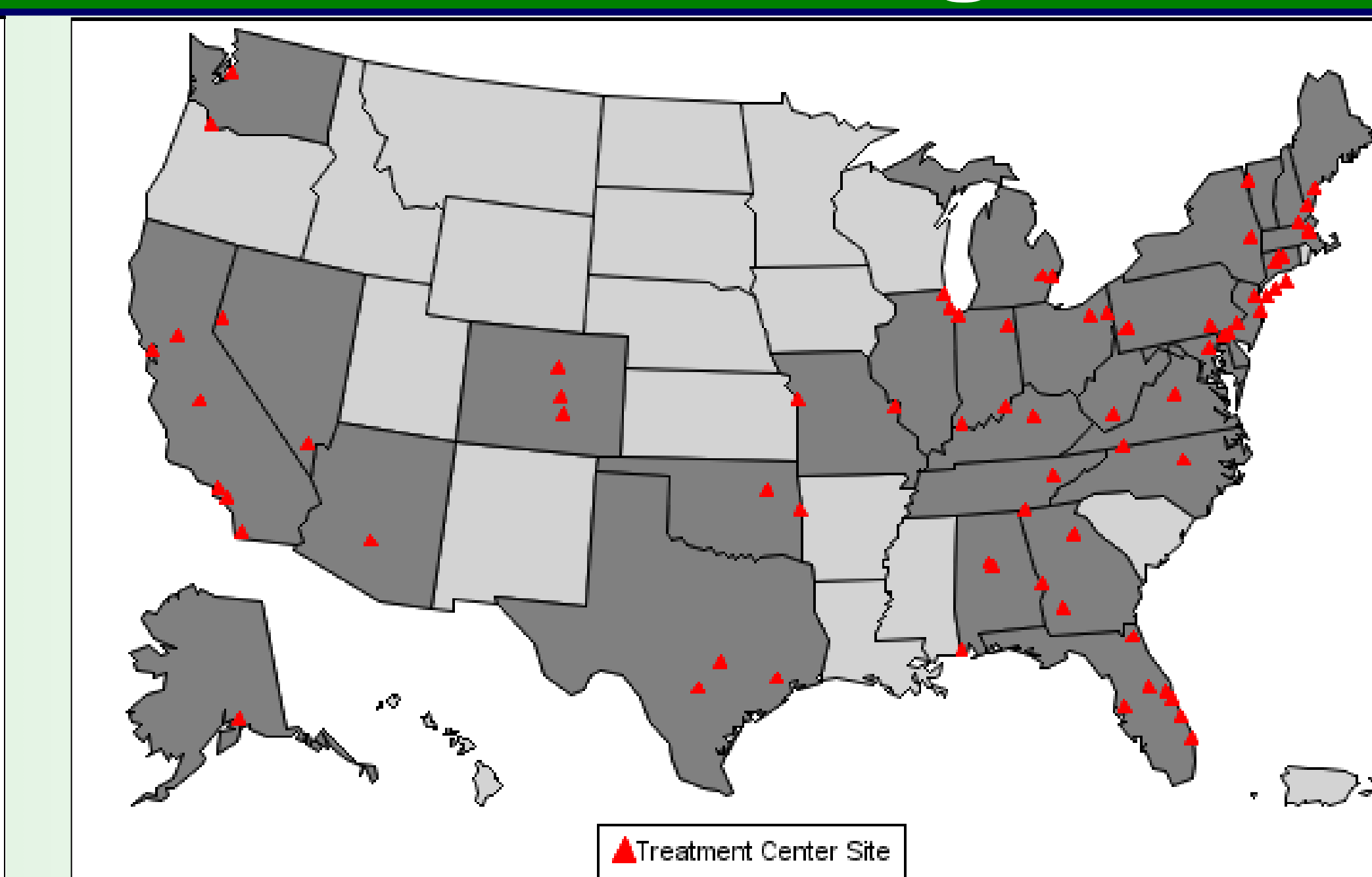
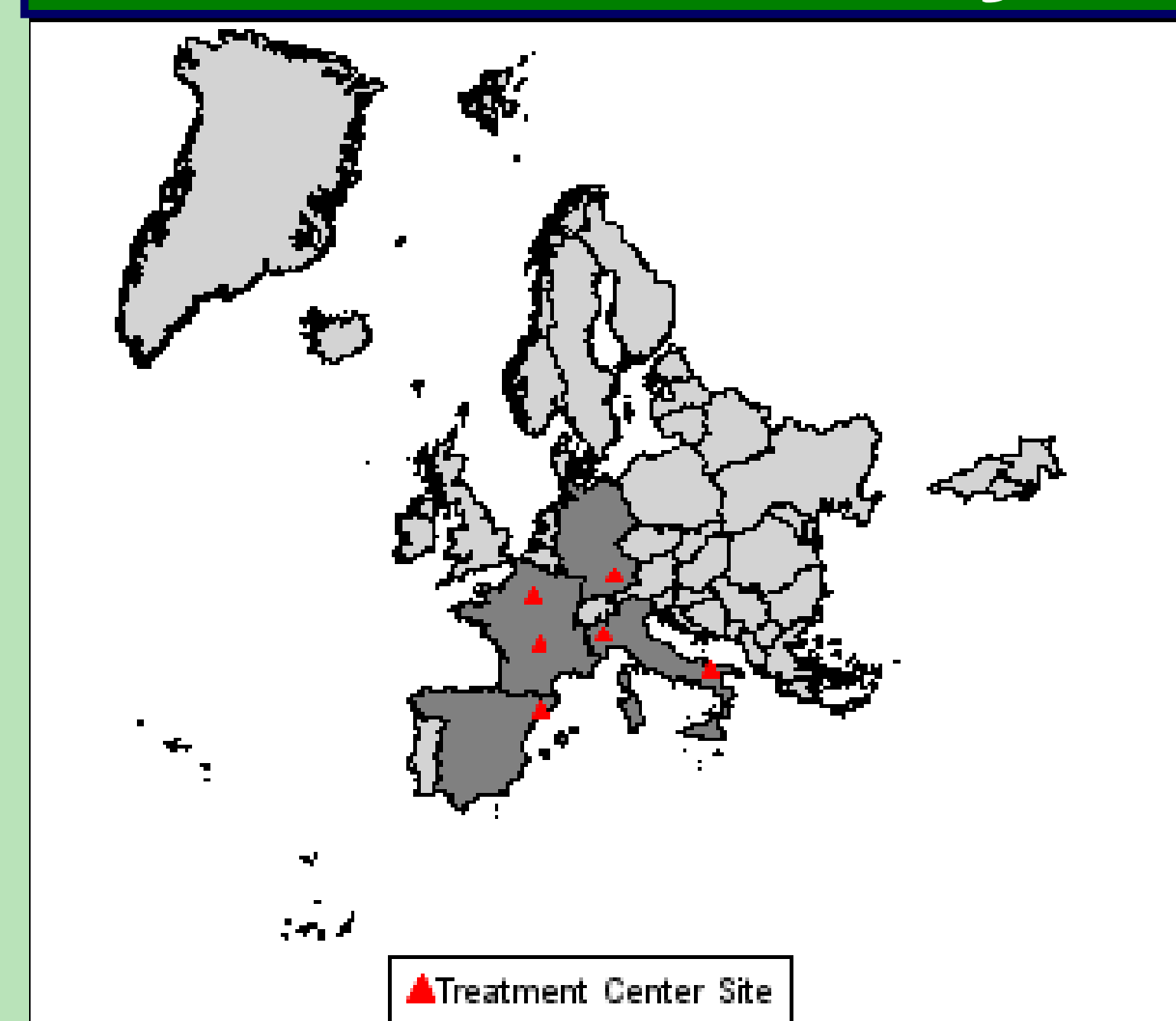
- These data are useful in describing differences between European and US respondents in the drugs they use to "get high" prior to entering drug treatment.
- Drugs typically prescribed for medication-assisted opiate addiction were used to "get high" within Europe, whereas a higher percentage of all drugs were endorsed by US patients.

Table 1. Number and percent\* reporting past 30-day use to "get high"

Drug	France n=144	Germany n=158	Italy n=309	Spain n=123	United States n=12,415
Buprenorphine	23 (15.97%)	20 (12.66%)	72 (23.30%)	2 (1.63%)	1,488 (11.99%)
Codeine	12 (8.33%)	4 (2.53%)	12 (3.88%)	8 (6.50%)	Not on Survey
Fentanyl	2 (1.39%)	43 (27.22%)	3 (0.97%)	1 (0.81%)	911 (7.34%)
Heroin	25 (17.36%)	91 (57.59%)	200 (64.72%)	80 (65.04%)	5,790 (46.64%)
Hydrocodone	None Reported	None Reported	3 (0.97%)	None Reported	3,834 (30.88%)
Hydromorphone	None Reported	None Reported	1 (0.32%)	None Reported	1,848 (14.89%)
Methadone	7 (4.86%)	56 (35.44%)	57 (18.45%)	21 (17.07%)	2,634 (21.22%)
Methylphenidate	1 (0.69%)	1 (0.63%)	1 (0.32%)	None Reported	Not on Survey
Morphine	6 (4.17%)	6 (3.80%)	None Reported	2 (1.63%)	2,080 (16.75%)
Oxycodone	1 (0.69%)	3 (1.90%)	3 (0.97%)	None Reported	5,113 (41.18%)
Oxymorphone	None Reported	None Reported	1 (0.32%)	None Reported	1,422 (11.45%)
Tapentadol	Not on Survey	Not on Survey	Not on Survey	Not on Survey	105 (0.85%)
Tramadol	2 (1.39%)	9 (5.70%)	6 (1.94%)	7 (5.69%)	472 (3.80%)

\*Percentages will not add to 100% as respondents can endorse use to get high of more than one opioid or not endorse any opioids.

## RADARS<sup>®</sup> System Treatment Programs



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