

Past Month Prevalence of Chewing, Snorting, Smoking and Injecting Prescription Opioid Tablets and Capsules among Individuals Entering Substance Abuse Treatment

Stevan Geoffrey Severtson, PhD¹, Scott Kreider, MS¹, Becki Bucher Bartelson, PhD¹, Matthew Ellis, MPE², Colleen M. Haynes, MPH¹, Theodore Cicero, PhD², Jody L. Green, PhD^{3, 1}, Richard C. Dart, MD, PhD^{3, 1}
¹Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center, Denver Health and Hospital Authority, Denver CO, United States
²Washington University, St Louis MO, United States
³Canadian Consumer Product and Pharmaceutical Safety Inc., Toronto, Ontario

Introduction

Use of prescription opioid tablets/capsules via routes such as injection and insufflation are associated with negative health outcomes such as HIV, overdose, and dependence. This analysis assesses past month prevalence of routes of abuse of commonly prescribed opioid analgesics among individuals entering treatment for substance abuse.

Methods

- The Survey of Key Informants' Patients Program is comprised of 30 Key Informants in Ontario (clinicians, treatment centre counselors, and others in positions to report on drug problems).
- Patients of Key Informants complete an anonymous questionnaire on prescription and illicit drug use, including source of acquisition, route of administration, and basic demographic information upon admission.
- A case is defined as an endorsement of one or more products within an active pharmaceutical ingredient.

Results

- From January 2016 through September 2016, 302 respondents completed the questionnaire.
- 212 (70.2%) endorsed past month abuse of a prescription opioid tablet/capsule.
- 185 (87.3%) of these reported either chewing, snorting, smoking or injecting a prescription opioid tablet/capsule.
- Among respondents who endorsed past month abuse of a prescription opioid tablet/capsule, oxycodone (n=137, 45.4%), hydromorphone (n=107, 35.4%), codeine (n=64, 21.2%), and morphine (n=51, 16.9%) were the most endorsed products.
- The most endorsed route of abuse among codeine and oxycodone cases was chewing (see Table 1).
- Among hydromorphone and morphine cases, the most endorsed route of abuse was injection (see Table 1).

Figure 1. Distribution of Routes of Abuse for Commonly Endorsed Opioids

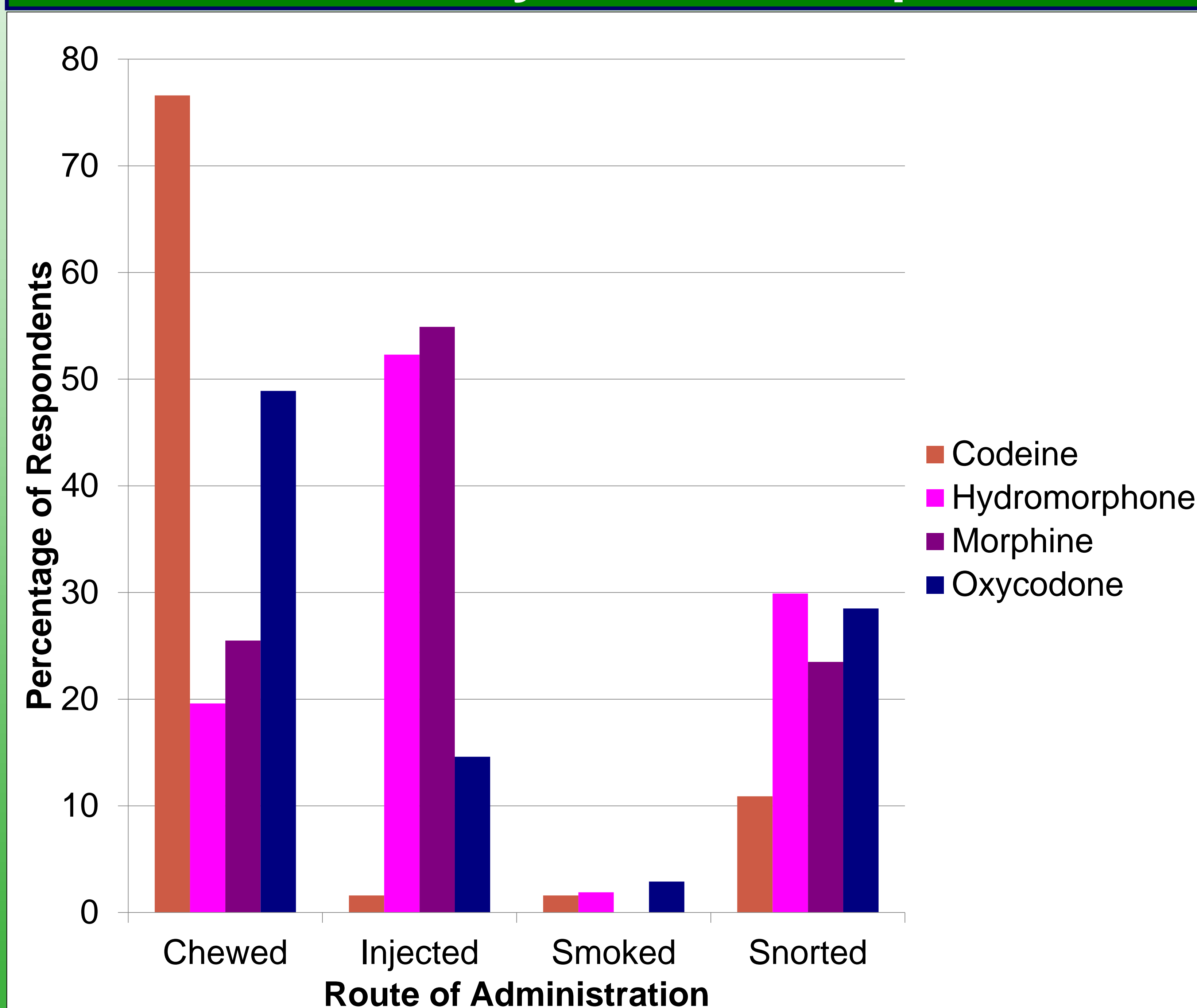


Table 1. Routes of Abuse Reported for Opioid Cases

	Codeine n=64	Hydromorphone n=107	Morphine n=51	Oxycodone n=137
Chewed	49 (76.6%)	21 (19.6%)	13 (25.5%)	67 (48.9%)
Injected	1 (1.6%)	56 (52%)	28 (54.9%)	20 (14.6%)
Smoked	1 (1.6%)	2 (1.9%)	0 (0%)	4 (2.9%)
Snorted	7 (10.9%)	32 (29.9%)	12 (23.5%)	39 (28.5%)

Conclusions

- Most respondents endorsed chewing, snorting, smoking or injecting a prescription opioid tablet/capsule in the month prior to entering treatment.
- The most endorsed route of administration varied within each active pharmaceutical ingredient.
- Chewing was a common route among codeine and oxycodone cases.
- Injection was a common route among morphine and hydromorphone cases.

Limitation/Offsetting Strength

- Limitation:** The program is limited in that the measure is based on self-report which is subject to errors in recall and in product identification.
- Strength:** The survey studies individuals seeking treatment for a substance use disorder who have abused a prescription opioid, a difficult to reach population who may be better able to identify substances abused.

Disclosures

The System is supported by subscriptions from pharmaceutical manufacturers for surveillance, research and reporting services. The System is the property of Canadian Consumer Product and Pharmaceutical Safety Inc. which retains exclusive ownership of all data, databases and systems. Subscribers do not participate in data collection or analysis, nor do they have access to the raw data.

The RADARS System is supported by subscriptions from pharmaceutical manufacturers for surveillance, research and reporting services. RADARS System is the property of Denver Health and Hospital Authority, a political subdivision of the State of Colorado. Denver Health retains exclusive ownership of all data, databases and systems. Subscribers do not participate in data collection or analysis, nor do they have access to the raw data.

