

## Unintended Consequences

OxyContin's® manufacturers never imagined that abusers would have their teeth pulled to get the drug. They never thought someone would fake medical records and get in a wheelchair for a prescription. It never occurred to them that a father, high on the drug, would "share" some with his teenage son, killing him. But all of these things have happened. OxyContin® has that kind of power over people.

OxyContin® is a brand name for oxycodone, a highly effective pain reliever, prescribed for moderate to severe pain from surgery, chronic diseases like multiple sclerosis, or acute diseases like cancer.

Patients have been receiving oxycodone prescriptions and others have been abusing oxycodone for many years. OxyContin® stands out because people receive a high dose, time-released, in a single pill.



## For More Information

Go to [www.intheknowzone.com](http://www.intheknowzone.com) for an extension of this pamphlet.

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# OxyContin®

*abusers beware*

People who can hardly get out of bed because of pain need serious pain relief, but taking strong medications four to six times a day can cause awful side effects. OxyContin® allows patients to take the drug only twice a day and to avoid most side effects.

Like all opioid drugs, oxycodone produces relaxation. For someone without pain, the drugs also produce a brief feeling of euphoria (happiness and well-being.)

Drug abusers chase this high at first. Later, they work to chase away withdrawal symptoms. OxyContin® abusers are like any other drug addicts—slaves to the drug.

The advantages that OxyContin® brings to patients with intense pain have had the unintended consequence of creating thousands of drug addicts.

## Oxycontin®—A Brief History

[www.intheknowzone.com/oxy/history/](http://www.intheknowzone.com/oxy/history/)

**in the know**

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5801 River Road  
New Orleans, LA 70123

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## Pumped Up Oxycodone

Oxycodone is a cousin of morphine, a drug used for severe pain relief—and abused by addicts—for almost 200 years.

In the past, oxycodone has been sold under the brand names Percodan®, Percocet®, and Tylox®.

A newer brand, OxyContin®, has a larger dose of oxycodone in a timed-release coating. Someone can take up to 80 milligrams of oxycodone in one dose, which enters the bloodstream gradually over 12 hours. Other brands of oxycodone have about 5 milligrams per pill, so patients need more pills more often.

The timed-release coating, which makes OxyContin® convenient for real patients, is what Oxy abusers see as the “problem” with the drug.

Drug abusers can be creative. Whoever first decided to abuse OxyContin® learned how to “get around” the timed-release and got a large dose of oxycodone all at once. That person taught other drug abusers how to do it, and an epidemic was born.

**True Horror Stories of OxyContin®**  
[www.intheknowzone.com/oxy/horror/](http://www.intheknowzone.com/oxy/horror/)

## A Killer By Any Name

OxyContin® may be called Oxy, Oxicotton, or Oxy 80s.

OxyContin® is often called Hillbilly Heroin because its effects are similar to heroin's, and it is commonly abused in rural areas.

People also call it Poor Man's Heroin, because some people's health insurance gets them the drug free or cheap with a doctor's prescription.

## Opioids in the Brain

Opioid drugs come from opium, which is extracted from the opium poppy. They include opium, heroin, morphine, hydrocodone, codeine, and oxycodone. Opioids produce relaxation, calm, and a sense of well-being.

Opioids bind rapidly to *opioid receptors* in the brain. They alter the *limbic system*, which controls emotions. Then they block pain messages from the spinal cord to the body. As depressants, opioids slow body functions like breathing, heart rate, and digestion.

**Chemistry of OxyContin®**  
[www.intheknowzone.com/oxy/chem/](http://www.intheknowzone.com/oxy/chem/)



## OxyContin® in the Body

Common side effects of OxyContin® abuse are constipation, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness, lack of interest, dizziness, itching, headache, dry mouth, sweating, and weakness.

## Withdrawal from OxyContin®

When abusers try to quit using OxyContin®, they face a new enemy: withdrawal.

Opioid withdrawal is horrible. About six hours after the last dose, the abuser has abdominal cramps, nausea,

diarrhea, anxiety, insomnia, sweating, and runny nose and eyes. The body shakes and the legs ache terribly.

The person's thoughts race wildly and every little sound drives him crazy. Addicts in withdrawal will do anything to get more of the drug.

## Effects of Opioids

[www.intheknowzone.com/oxy/damage/](http://www.intheknowzone.com/oxy/damage/)

## Oxy's Legacy

OxyContin® addiction is devastating. Oxy causes addiction quickly because, like all opioids, it mimics the body's natural pain and stress relievers, the *endorphins*. The body gets used to high levels of the drug, and the addict needs more of it to feel the same effects.

That's when Oxy addicts hit the streets. They need a lot of cash, fast. OxyContin® addicts pawn their things, and turn to robbery, forgery, and prostitution to get money. Heroin can be less expensive than black market Oxy, so addicts often switch to heroin.

## Oxy Overdose

The most serious risk of OxyContin® abuse is overdose. Someone doesn't have to be a repeat user in order to overdose on Oxy. Any “recreational” use of OxyContin® is a gamble with your life.

Symptoms of opioid overdose include pinpoint pupils, very slow heart rate, slow, shallow breathing, noticeably low body temperature, seizures, and coma. If not treated in a hospital immediately, people overdosing on opioids die of respiratory depression.

Since OxyContin® was introduced in 1996, deaths related to oxycodone have increased 100%, and emergency room visits have increased 400%!

## Real Pain Relief

“Recreational” use of any drug is dangerous, but with OxyContin®, it's begging for trouble. It is up to 16 times as strong as similar medications, and up to 16 times as deadly. If someone offers you Oxy, say “no thanks” and get out of there as quickly as you can.



SAMURAI  
abuse  
opium  
GOOP  
deadly