

OxyContin™

Street terms for OxyContin™: Hillbilly heroin, Oxy, Oxycotton¹

What does OxyContin™ look like?

- OxyContin™ is a legal, time-release pain medication that comes in tablet form.

What are the methods of usage?

- Chewing the tablets
- Snorting crushed tablets
- Dissolving tablets in water and injecting
- These methods cause a faster, highly dangerous release of medication.

Who uses OxyContin™?

- Abuse of OxyContin™ in rural Maine, Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia brought national attention to this problem.
- The areas most currently affected by OxyContin™ abuse are eastern Kentucky; New Orleans, Louisiana; southern Maine; Philadelphia and southwestern Pennsylvania; southwestern Virginia; Cincinnati, Ohio; and Phoenix, Arizona.²
- An increase in illegal use has been especially apparent on the East Coast.³
- 9% or 19.9 million Americans have used pain relievers illegally in their lifetime.⁴

How does OxyContin™ get to the United States?

- Because it is a legal drug, OxyContin™ is supplied across the country for legitimate medical purposes.
- Word of mouth has allowed users to devise illicit usage techniques.
- Pharmacy robberies, health care fraud, and international trafficking constitute illicit distribution ability.

How much does OxyContin™ cost?

- When legally sold, a 10-mg tablet of OxyContin™ will cost \$1.25 and an 80-mg tablet will cost \$6.
- When illegally sold, a 10-mg tablet of OxyContin™ can cost between \$5 and \$10. An 80-mg tablet can cost between \$65 and \$80.⁵

What are some consequences of illicit OxyContin™ use?

- Long-term usage can lead to physical dependence.⁶
- A large dosage can cause severe respiratory depression that can lead to death.⁷

- Withdrawal symptoms include restlessness, muscle and bone pain, insomnia, diarrhea, vomiting, cold flashes with goose bumps, and involuntary leg movements.⁸

1 Office of National Drug Control Policy, Street Terms: Drugs and the Drug Trade.

2 Drug Enforcement Administration, OxyContin™: Pharmaceutical Diversion, March 2002.

3 DEA Congressional Testimony, December 11, 2001.

4 Office of National Drug Control Policy, OxyContin™ Fact Sheet.

5 United States Department of Justice, OxyContin™ Diversion and Abuse, January 2001.

6 National Institute on Drug Abuse, Prescription Drugs: Abuse and Addiction, February 2002.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.