



American Drug Testing

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DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE ADVISOR

AN ONGOING SERIES TO PROTECT YOUR COMPANY BY HELPING TO KEEP DRUGS OUT OF YOUR WORKPLACE.

Prescription Pain Reliever Abuse Rising

According to a report by The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), an estimated 31.8 million Americans have used pain relievers non-medically in their lifetimes, up from 29.6 million in 2002. OxyContin® controlled-release



oxycodone hydrochloride) is a prescription pain reliever that first became available in 1995. Although it accounts for a small proportion of overall pain reliever misuse, this drug is of particular concern because of its increasing use in recent years. Lifetime nonmedical use of OxyContin® increased in the United States from 1.9 to 3.1 million persons between 2002 and 2004.

This report focuses on persons aged 12 or older who initiated

In Brief

- *In 2004, among persons aged 12 or older, 2.4 million initiated nonmedical use of prescription pain relievers within the past year*
- *615,000 new nonmedical users of OxyContin® in 2004*
- *Three fourths (73.8 percent) of past year initiates of nonmedical pain reliever use had used another illicit drug prior to using pain relievers non-medically.*
- *Nearly all (99.1 percent) past year initiates of non-medical OxyContin® use had used another illicit drug prior to using OxyContin® nonmedically*

nonmedical use of pain relievers and OxyContin® in the 12 months prior to the survey. In 2004, among persons aged 12 or older, 2.4 million initiated nonmedical use of prescription pain relievers within the past year. This is more than the estimated numbers of initiates for marijuana (2.1 million) or cocaine (1.0 million). In 2004, there were 615,000 new non-medical users of OxyContin®. This number includes persons who had used other pain relievers nonmedically prior to

using OxyContin®, as well as those for whom OxyContin® was the first pain reliever they had used nonmedically.

Characteristics of Recent Initiates of Nonmedical Use of Pain Relievers

Among persons who initiated nonmedical use of pain relievers in the past year, 48.0 percent used Vicodin®, Lortab®, or Lorcet® nonmedically; 34.3 percent had used Darvocet®,



Darvon®, or Tylenol® with codeine nonmedically; and 20.0 percent had used Percocet®, Percodan®, or Tylox® nonmedically.

In 2004, over half (54.9 percent) of the persons who initiated nonmedical use of pain relievers were female. The average age at first nonmedical use was 23 years. Approximately 75 percent of recent initiates of nonmedical use of pain relievers were non-Hispanic white. Also in 2004, over half (55.1 percent) of the persons who initiated non-medical use of OxyContin® were male. The average age at first nonmedical use of OxyContin® was 25 years. Almost 90 percent of recent initiates of nonmedical use of OxyContin® were non-Hispanic white.

Prior Substance Use by Recent Pain Reliever Initiates and Recent OxyContin® Initiates

Approximately 87 percent of past year initiates of non-medical pain reliever use had used alcohol prior to using pain relievers nonmedically; 99.4 percent of past year initiates of nonmedical OxyContin® use had used alcohol prior to using OxyContin® nonmedically.

Three fourths (73.8 percent) of past year initiates of non-medical pain reliever use had used another illicit drug (marijuana, cocaine or crack, heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, nonmedical use of tranquilizers, nonmedical use of stimulants, or nonmedical use of sedatives) prior to using pain relievers nonmedically. Nearly all (99.1 percent) of past year initiates of non-medical OxyContin® use had used another illicit drug prior to using OxyContin® non-medically, including 97.1 percent who had used marijuana and 97.4 percent who had used some other pain reliever nonmedically.

Source: NSDUH

The Drug-Free Workplace Advisor

is a resource of American Drug Testing, the Lowcountry's premier drug-free workplace administrator, and testing company. Let us help you maintain a drug-free workplace. Contact us at (843) 747-4111.



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