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## OXYCONTIN

### What is OxyContin?

OxyContin (oxycodone HCl controlled-release) is the brand name for an opioid analgesic (pain reliever) -- a narcotic. It is available by prescription only and is used to treat moderate to severe pain when around-the-clock analgesic is needed for an extended period of time.



### What are the street names/slang terms for OxyContin?

Hillbilly Heroin, Killers, "OC", "OXY", Oxy 80, Oxies, Oyx cotton, Oxy coffins, Oceans.

### What does it look like?

OxyContin is available in tablet form in 5 doses: 10, 20, 40, 80, and 160mg. (However, the manufacturer is no longer shipping 160mg).

### How is it used?

As pain medication, OxyContin is taken every 12 hours because the tablets contain a controlled, time-release formulation of the medication. Most pain medications must be taken every three to six hours. Oxycontin abusers remove the sustained-release coating to get a rapid release of the medication and the powder is then swallowed, sniffed or injected, causing a rush of euphoria similar to heroin.

### What are its short-term effects?

The most serious risk associated with opioids, including OxyContin, is respiratory depression. Common opioid side effects are constipation, nausea, sedation, dizziness, vomiting, headache, dry mouth, sweating, and weakness. Taking a large single dose of an opioid could cause severe respiratory depression that can lead to death.

### What are its long-term effects?

Chronic use of opioids can result in tolerance for the drugs, which means that users must take higher doses to achieve the same initial effects. Long-term use also can lead to physical dependence and addiction -- the body adapts to the presence of the drug, and withdrawal symptoms occur if use is reduced or stopped. Properly managed medical use of pain relievers is safe and rarely causes clinical addiction, defined as compulsive, often uncontrollable use of drugs. Taken exactly as prescribed, opioids can be used to manage pain effectively.

### What is its federal classification?

Schedule II

### Source

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Center Watch, Pharmacist's Letter, The New York Times