

Oregon's Drug Review: Evidence on Opioids

Opioids relieve pain. These drugs are also called narcotics. The American Pain Society endorses opioids for chronic pain (pain lasting over six months.) Use opioids only under guidance of your doctor.

Which Drugs Were Included In This Review?

This review looked at the following long-acting opioids for chronic pain.

(It did not include use in cancer pain. It did not compare short-acting opioids, often used for breakthrough pain.)

<u>Tablets</u>	<u>Patches</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• morphine sulfate ER (Avinza, Kadian, MS Contin, Oramorph SR)• oxycodone ER (Oxycontin)• methadone (Dolophine, Methadose)• levorphanol	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• fentanyl transdermal (Duragesic)

What Do These Drugs Have In Common?

- All opioids reduce pain. No long-acting opioid is better than another.
- Opioids are alike in rates of side effects. This includes abuse and addiction.
- No data yet shows that effects of opioids vary by age, race, or sex.

What Are the Key Differences Among These Drugs?

- Cost and convenience are the key differences among opioids.

Ask Your Health Care Practitioner During Your Next Visit:

- Am I taking the most effective drug for my condition?
- Are alternative drugs available that are equally effective?
- Are alternative drugs available that are effective, but less costly?
- Is there a generic available for my brand name drug?
- Will this drug interact with other medications I take?