OPIOID USE FOLLOWING THE INTRODUCTION OF AN EXTENDED-RELEASE OXYCODONE FORMULATION WITH TAMPER-RESISTANT PROPERTIES: A PROSPECTIVE HISTORICAL CHART REVIEW IN METHADONE-MAINTAINED PATIENTS

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INTRODUCTION / AIM

The problem of prescription opioid abuse, and strategies to mitigate this risk, continues to gain attention. Regulatory agencies, including Health Canada, have been considering the attributes of tamper-resistant prescription opioids to reduce tampering and inappropriate use. Emerging data are demonstrating that tamper-resistant opioids may play an important role in changing prescription opioid abuse behaviors. The current study was a prospective historical chart review to examine if the reformulation of OxyContin® into a tamper-resistant version (OxyNEO®) had an impact on oxycodone-positive urine drug screens (UDSs) compared to UDSs positive for morphine or morphine-related, non-synthetic opioids (positive control) in opioid-dependent patients receiving methadone maintenance therapy (MMT) in three clinics in Ontario, Canada.

METHODS

The study examined 250 eligible charts from consenting patients on MMT who had data during the time periods when only OxyContin was available (baseline), during the transition to OxyNEO, and post-OxyContin when only OxyNEO was available. Eligible patients were also invited to complete an exploratory questionnaire regarding their retrospective opioid use.

RESULTS

The primary results demonstrated a marked reduction in oxycodone-positive UDSs that showed stepwise, statistically significant decreases during the transition and post-OxyContin periods relative to baseline. Morphine-related positive UDSs remained relatively stable during the same periods. There were no significant gender differences noted.

DISCUSSION / CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that the introduction of OxyNEO was associated with a statistically significant reduction in oxycodone exposure in a population of methadone-maintained patients. Further characterization of the ability of tamper-resistant opioids to deter abuse is an important topic of investigation.

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