

Approximate relative potency of opioids in chronic use

How to use the conversion table

1. Calculate the total daily dose of analgesic A being taken
2. Use the table to calculate the equivalent dose of morphine
(*Dose of analgesic A x potency ratio = dose of morphine*)
3. Convert the daily dose of morphine to appropriate 4 or 12 hourly dose
(Remember the dose of may need to be increased if the patient's pain is not controlled)

e.g Buprenorphine 0.2mg tds = 0.6mg daily
 0.6mg buprenorphine daily = $0.6 \times 60 = 36\text{mg}$ morphine daily
 36mg morphine daily = Morphine sulphate M/R 20mg BD (approx) or
 Morphine sulphate I/R 5mg every 4 hours (approx)

Analgesic (A)	Route	Potency ratio to oral morphine	Duration of action	Approx dose equivalence	
				Analgesic A	Morphine sulphate M/R
Weak opioids					
Codeine	Oral	0.1 = 1/10th	3-6 hrs	60mg qds	10mg bd
Dextropropoxyphene (Co-proxamol 32.5/325)	Oral	0.1 = 1/10th	4-6 hrs	260mg in 24 hr (2 qds)	10-15mg bd
Dihydrocodeine	Oral	0.1 = 1/10th	3-6 hrs	60mg qds	10mg bd
Meptazinol	Oral	0.04 = 1/25th	3-6hrs	200mg qds	15mg bd
Tramadol	Oral	0.2 = 1/5th	4-6 hrs	50mg qds	20mg bd
Strong opioids					
Buprenorphine	Sublingual	60	6-8 hrs	0.2mg tds	20mg bd
Diamorphine	Oral	1	3-4 hrs	10mg q4h	30mg bd
Diamorphine	S/C	3	3-4 hrs	10mg over 24 hrs	15mg bd
Hydromorphone	Oral	7.5	4-5 hrs (12hrs M/R)	4mg bd	30mg bd
Morphine	Oral / Rectal	1	3-6 hrs (12hrs M/R)	10mg q4h	30mg bd
Morphine	S/C	2	3-6 hrs	10mg over 24 hrs	10mg bd
Oxycodone	Oral	2	4-6 hrs (12hrs M/R)	10mg bd	20mg bd
Oxycodone	S/C	4	4-6 hrs	10mg over 24 hrs	20mg bd
Fentanyl	Transdermal	Morphine dose in 24 hrs is approx patch strength multiplied by 3	72 hrs	50mcg	70mg bd

Dextropropoxyphene has a prolonged plasma half life leading to accumulation when given repeatedly