

Oxycodone: a review of its use in the management of pain.

[Riley J](#), [Eisenberg E](#), [Müller-Schwefe G](#), [Drewes AM](#), [Arendt-Nielsen L](#).

Author information

- ¹Department of Palliative Care, The Royal Marsden NHS Trust, London, UK.
Julia.Riley@rmh.nhs.uk

Abstract

BACKGROUND:

Oxycodone is a strong opioid that acts at mu- and kappa-opioid receptors. It has pharmacological actions similar to strong opioids, but with a specific pharmacologic profile and greater analgesic potency to morphine. The efficacy of oxycodone in managing neuropathic and somatic pain, both of malignant and non-malignant origin, has been established in a wide range of settings.

SCOPE:

This review aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of oxycodone and its role within clinical settings in order to provide an evidence-based perspective on its use in the clinic. Literature searches using Medline, EMBASE and Cochrane Databases were used to compile data for review. The review provides information on the pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of oxycodone and also profiles established clinical data in neuropathic and somatic pain as well as emerging data to support the use of oxycodone in visceral pain, which may be due to its interaction with kappa-opioid receptors. Oxycodone is available in a range of formulations for oral, intraspinal and parenteral administration.

FINDINGS:

The prolonged-release form of oxycodone offers a fast onset of analgesia, controlling pain for 12 hours and providing clinically meaningful relief of moderate to severe pain and improving quality of life across a broad spectrum of pain types.

CONCLUSIONS:

Oxycodone provides significant pain relief. It has relevant points of difference from other opioids and as such may be a suitable alternative to morphine.

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