

The oral morphine equivalent of buprenorphine TD patches – What conversion ratio do you use?

November 2012–January 2013

Number of responses = 70

1) Generally what would you consider the PO morphine equivalent to be for a 20microgram/h TD patch? (one_of)

answer	votes	% of vote
30mg/24h, i.e. approximate PO morphine to TD buprenorphine ratio of 60:1	15	21%
36mg/24h, i.e. approximate PO morphine to TD buprenorphine ratio of 75:1	14	20%
48mg/24h, i.e. approximate PO morphine to TD buprenorphine ratio of 100:1	30	43%
55mg/24h, i.e. approximate PO morphine to TD buprenorphine ratio of 115:1	4	6%
Other (please state in the comments section below)	7	10%

2) Using the conversion ratio stated in question 1, have you generally experienced any problems with underdosing? (one_of)

answer	votes	% of vote
30mg/24h, i.e. approximate ratio of 60:1	15	21%
	Of these 15: 4 said Yes, sometimes underdosed 4 said Yes, rarely underdosed 7 said No, generally correct conversion	
36mg/24h, i.e. approximate ratio of 75:1	14	20%
	Of these 14: 1 said Yes, sometimes underdosed 3 said Yes, rarely underdosed 10 said No, generally correct conversion	
48mg/24h, i.e. approximate ratio of 100:1	30	43%
	Of these 30: 9 said Yes, sometimes underdosed 3 said Yes, rarely underdosed 18 said No, generally correct conversion	
55mg/24h, i.e. approximate ratio of 115:1	4	6%
	4 said No, generally correct conversion	
Other (not specified)	7	10%
	Of these 7: 1 said Yes, often underdosed 2 said Yes, sometimes underdosed 3 said No generally correct conversion 1 not specified	

3) Using the conversion ratio stated in question 1, have you generally experienced any problems with overdosing? (one_of)

answer	votes	% of vote
30mg/24h, i.e. approximate ratio of 60:1	15	21%
	Of these 15: 10 said No, generally correct conversion 1 said Yes, sometimes overdosed 4 said Yes, rarely overdosed	
36mg/24h, i.e. approximate ratio of 75:1	14	20%
	Of these 14: 10 said No, generally correct conversion 1 said Yes, sometimes overdosed 3 said Yes, rarely overdosed	

48mg/24h, i.e. approximate ratio of 100:1	30	43%
	Of these 30: 23 said No, generally correct conversion 1 said Yes, sometimes overdosed 6 said Yes, rarely overdosed	
55mg/24h, i.e. approximate ratio of 115:1	4	6%
	4 said No, generally correct conversion	
Other	7	10%
	6 said No, generally correct conversion 1 not specified	

4) Further comments. (freetext)

The comments are listed according to the conversion ratio the responder specified in Q1:
PO morphine 30mg/24h to TD buprenorphine 20microgram/h, i.e. approximate PO morphine to TD buprenorphine ratio of 60:1
If the patient is opioid naive, I prefer to start with half the calculated dose and titrate. In any case patches preferably in patients with stable doses.
Opiate conversion inexact at the best of times and with buprenorphine even more variable.
I initially tried the 100:1 conversion but repeatedly found problems with loss of analgesia. Over the last year I have reverted to a 60:1 ratio.
The team has conversion guidelines put together by the consultants based on Cochrane systematic review of conversion ratios in use across board.
PO morphine 36mg/24h to TD buprenorphine 20microgram/h, i.e. approximate PO morphine to TD buprenorphine ratio of 75:1
We actually round up to the nearest 10mg so our recommended conversion for 20microgram/h buprenorphine patch is actually 40mg of oral Morphine over 24hours, which has worked well for us, although to be fair we use buprenorphine rarely.
Any conversion ratio has a risk to fail and has to be viewed individually.
PO morphine 48mg/24h to TD buprenorphine 20microgram/hr, i.e. approximate PO morphine to TD buprenorphine ratio of 100:1
I believe it is better to underdose and top up with Oramorph/Oxynorm as required then reassess the patch dose.
Would use the PCF so hope I have got it right! Have not really had any problems but do not see many buprenorphine patches used in the areas I work in.
Not used a lot but 100:1 feels about right.
Therapeutic Guidelines Australia also recommends 100:1.
I find it helpful to remember that a 5microgram /h buprenorphine patch is roughly equivalent to 12mg PO morphine in 24hrs and have not encountered any problems with this for patients naive to strong opioids.
We do start opioid naive patients on a 5microgram/h or at most a 10microgram/h patch as per manufacturers recommendations, bearing in mind it is hard to reverse. In Australia we don't have higher strength patches, so limited info here.
See http://www.healthnetworks.health.wa.gov.au/cancer/docs/Opioid_Conversion.pdf
PO morphine 55mg/24h to TD buprenorphine 20microgram/hr, i.e. approximate PO morphine to TD buprenorphine ratio of 115:1
My conversion practice has been each patch equivalent to approximately its value in subcutaneous morphine, i.e. orally three times that calculation e.g. buprenorphine 5microgram/h = 5mg SC morphine per 24 hours = 15 mg oral morphine per 24 hours.
Other ratios
I use it infrequently, so always refer to manufacturers guide.
Generally consider buprenorphine 20microgram/h TD patch to equate to MST 20mg b.d. (morphine 40mg/24hr) and buprenorphine 10microgram/h TD patch to equate to MST 10mg b.d. (morphine 20mg/24hr). I have found this regimen safe and easy to calculate.
I use 1.7 conversion ratio (PO morphine to TD buprenorphine 70:1).
Buprenorphine 20microgram/h TD patch = 20mg/24h oral morphine.