
The Washington Post



Topline & Methodology

***The Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation
Survey of Long-Term Prescription Painkiller Users and
Their Household Members***

December 2016

This Washington Post/Kaiser Family Foundation poll was conducted by telephone October 3 - November 9, 2016, among a random national sample of 809 adults age 18 and older who they themselves, or a household member have taken strong prescription painkillers for a period of two months or more at some time in the past two years other than to treat pain from cancer or terminal illness. The results from the full survey have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 4 percentage points. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by SSRS of Media, Pa.

See Methodology appendix on page 29 for full details.

SCREENER QUESTIONS

S3. I have a question about strong prescription painkillers, sometimes called opioids, including drugs such as morphine, Percocet, OxyContin, and Vicodin. In the past TWO years, have you or someone in your household taken a strong prescription painkiller, or not? Please include painkillers that you or a household member took with or without a doctor's prescription. [IF YES: Was that you, or someone else in your household?] [If no, terminate]

S4. (Ask if respondent or someone in household has taken a strong prescription painkiller in past two years) Did (you/that person) take the prescription painkillers for a period of TWO months or more, or less than two months? [If less than 2 months, terminate]

S5. (Ask if respondent or someone in household has taken a strong prescription painkiller in past two years and for a period of two months or more) Did (you/that person) take the prescription painkillers to treat pain from cancer or a terminal illness, or was it for some other reason? [If related to treatment for cancer/terminal illness, terminate]

OPIOID USER

	Personally Using (User)	Household member of user (HH member)
All	72	28

Note: Those personally using were asked the questions directly about their use, whereas household members were asked about the user in most cases, as indicated in the questions.

MAIN QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1. (Items a-d of half sample) First, for each health issue I name, please tell me how serious a problem you think it is in this country. The first is [INSERT ITEM]. Is that very serious, somewhat serious, not too serious, or not at all serious? How about [NEXT ITEM]? (Randomize items)

	NET	----- Serious Very	----- Somewhat	NET	--- Not serious Not too	-- Not at all	No opin.	Unwtd N
a. Obesity, that is, people being seriously overweight								
All	95	61	34	4	3	1	1	405
User	95	64	31	4	3	1	1	312
U.S. Adults*	92	63	29	7	5	2	1	599
b. Cancer								
All	97	86	11	2	2	1	1	405
User	97	87	10	2	2	*	1	312
U.S. Adults*	99	82	16	1	1	-	*	599
c. Heart disease								
All	94	72	22	4	3	1	2	404
User	94	75	19	4	3	1	2	310
U.S. Adults*	95	70	25	4	3	1	1	603
d. Diabetes								
All	96	69	27	3	2	*	2	404
User	96	74	23	2	2	*	2	310
U.S. Adults*	95	68	27	4	3	*	1	603
e. Alcohol abuse								
All	93	62	30	6	5	2	1	809
User	94	67	27	5	4	1	*	622
HH member	88	51	38	9	7	2	3	187
U.S. Adults*	89	52	37	11	8	2	*	1202
f. Abuse of strong prescription painkillers, sometimes called opioids, such as Percocet, OxyContin or Vicodin								
All	87	63	23	11	7	4	3	809
User	84	62	23	12	7	5	3	622
HH member	92	67	25	7	4	3	1	187
U.S. Adults*	92	66	26	6	4	2	2	1202
g. Heroin abuse								
All	89	72	16	4	2	2	7	809
User	89	74	15	4	2	2	7	622
HH member	88	69	19	5	3	2	8	187
U.S. Adults*	93	72	20	6	4	2	1	1202

* Kaiser Family Foundation, Kaiser Health Tracking Poll (conducted November 15-21, 2016)

To all: As I mentioned, when I say strong prescription painkillers I'm referring to drugs sometimes called opioids, including drugs such as morphine, Percocet, OxyContin, and Vicodin. Let me remind you that this is a completely confidential interview and that there are no right or wrong answers.

If household member interview: We're interested in how prescription painkiller use affects both the people taking the medications and other people in their household. Some of these questions will be about your household member's personal experience, and you may or may not have enough information to answer them. If you don't know the answer to a question, just let me know and we'll move on to the next one.

Q2. (Ask if household member interview) Who is the person in your household that has taken the prescription painkillers for a period of TWO months or more? Is it your spouse, child, parent, or some other person?

	Spouse	Child	Parent	Some other person	No opinion	Unwgt N
HH member	43	9	25	21	*	187

Q2a. (Ask if household member interview) Is that person male or female?

	Male	Female	Other (Vol.)	No opinion	Unwgt N
HH member	46	54	-	1	187

Q2b/2c. (Ask if household member interview) What is that person's age?

	<18 (Vol.)	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	No opinion	Unwgt N
HH member	1	15	31	30	23	*	187

Q3. Are (you/they) currently taking any of these strong prescription painkillers, or are (you/they) no longer taking them?

	Currently taking	No longer taking	No opinion
All	54	44	1
User	55	45	*
HH member	53	43	3

NOTE: Current opioid users were asked the questions in the present tense, indicated where applicable in the first part of the parenthetical text within the question. Former opioid users were asked the questions in the past tense and read the language in the second half of the parentheses.

For the next set of questions, I'll be asking about the most recent time (you/they) have taken these strong prescription painkillers for a period of 2 months or more, even if (you've/they've) taken them at other times in the past.

Q4. How long (have [you/they] been taking)/(did [you/they] take) these painkillers?

	6 months or less	More than 6 mths. but less than 1 yr.	At least 1 year but less than 2 years	2 years or more	No opin.
All	28	8	12	51	1
User	28	7	13	52	*
HH member	28	11	9	50	2

Q5. Which of the following comes closest to the reason (you/they) BEGAN taking painkillers? Was it for ...? (IF SURGERY AFTER AN ACCIDENT, CODED AS ACCIDENT/INJURY)

	All	User	HH member
Pain after surgery	25	25	23
Pain after an accident or injury	27	25	32
Chronic pain	42	44	35
Recreational use	3	3	5
Some other reason	2	2	3
No opinion	*	-	2

Q6. (Ask if not currently taking Rx painkillers) People stop taking these painkillers for a variety of reasons. For each of the following, please tell me if this is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason (you/they) stopped taking these painkillers? Was it because (INSERT ITEM)? (RANDOMIZE ITEMS)

	Reason (NET)	Major reason	Minor reason	Not a reason	No opin.	Unwgt N
a. (Your/their) prescription ended						
All	31	18	13	68	1	322
User	34	20	14	65	1	253
b. (You/they) no longer needed them for pain						
All	59	42	16	39	3	322
User	60	45	15	37	3	253
c. (You/they) were worried about becoming addicted to them						
All	49	35	14	51	1	322
User	50	36	13	50	1	253
d. (You/they) didn't like the side-effects						
All	45	31	13	54	1	322
User	45	33	12	55	*	253

Q7. Overall, would you say (your/their) quality of life (is/was) better or worse than if (you/they) had not taken these medications, or (is/was) it about the same?

	Better	Worse	About the same	No opinion
All	56	18	24	3
User	57	16	25	2
HH member	52	22	21	4

Q8. Do you think (your/their) use of strong prescription painkillers (has had/had) a positive or negative impact on (your/their) (INSERT), or has it had no impact at all? Is that very or just somewhat? (Randomize items)

	----- Positive -----			---	Negative		----	No	Not emp/	No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	impact	ret/dis	(Vol.)	op.
a. Finances										
All	7	5	2	22	9	14	69	-		1
User	8	6	3	17	5	11	74	-		1
HH mem.	4	2	2	37	17	20	58	-		1
b. Personal relationships										
All	15	9	6	21	9	13	63	-		1
User	15	10	5	16	6	11	68	-		1
HH mem.	14	7	7	34	17	17	50	-		2
c. (Your/Their) ability to do (your/their) job										
All	24	16	7	18	6	12	45	12		1
User	23	18	5	14	6	9	48	14		*
HH mem.	24	12	12	27	6	20	38	8		3
d. Physical health										
All	40	24	16	25	12	14	33	-		1
User	42	26	16	20	9	11	37	-		1
HH mem.	36	18	18	39	18	22	23	-		2
e. Mental health										
All	21	12	9	25	13	12	52	-		2
User	21	12	9	19	9	10	57	-		2
HH mem.	20	9	11	39	22	17	38	-		3

Q9. Overall, how well would you say these prescription painkillers (reduce/reduced) (your/their) pain? Very well, somewhat well, not too well, not well at all?

	--- Very/somewhat well ---			---	Not too/not at all --		No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	opin.
All	88	49	39	10	7	3	2
User	92	53	40	8	6	2	*
HH member	79	40	39	17	12	5	5

Q10. For each of the following, please tell me if this is a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason (you/they) (take/took) these painkillers? (ROTATE a-b, d; ALWAYS ASK c LAST)

	Reason (NET)	Major reason	Minor reason	Not a reason	No opin.
a. To relieve physical pain					
All	97	90	7	3	*
User	98	92	6	2	*
HH member	94	84	10	6	*
b. To deal with day to day stress					
All	24	15	9	76	1
User	22	14	8	78	1
HH member	28	17	11	71	1
c. For fun or to get high					
All	34	19	15	65	1
User	34	20	14	66	1
HH member	33	16	17	65	2
d. To relax or relieve tension					
All	15	11	4	85	*
User	12	10	3	88	-
HH member	21	15	6	79	*

Q11. Did a doctor or medical professional initially prescribe (you/them) the painkillers, or did (you/they) get them some other way?

	From a doctor/medical professional	Some other way	No opinion
All	96	4	-
User	97	3	-
HH member	93	7	-

Q12. (Ask if initially got painkiller Rx from doctor/medical professional) (Has/Did) (your/their) doctor (prescribed/prescribe) or (told/tell) (you /them) to increase or decrease the dose (since/after) (you/they) started taking these painkillers, or (has/did) the dose (stayed/stay) the same?

	Increase	Decrease	Stayed the same	Both (Vol.)	No opinion	Unwtd. N
All	23	16	54	4	4	782
User	22	16	58	3	1	610
HH member	24	16	44	6	11	172

Q11/Q12. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Initially got prescription pain-killer from doctor	96	97	93
Doctor increased dose	22	21	22
Doctor decreased dose	15	15	15
Dose stayed the same	52	56	41
Both (Vol.)	4	3	6
No opinion	4	1	10
Got prescription painkillers some other way	4	3	7
No opinion	-	-	-

Q12a. (Ask if initially got painkiller Rx from a doctor/medical professional) (Has/Did) (your/their) doctor (prescribed/prescribe) or (told/tell) (you/them) to take the drug more often or less often (since/after) (you/they) started taking these painkillers, or (have/did) (your/their) doctor's instructions (stayed/stay) the same?

	More often	Less often	Stayed the same	Both (Vol.)	No opinion	Unwtd. N
All	10	15	69	2	4	782
User	10	13	74	3	1	610
HH member	10	20	55	2	13	172

Q11/Q12a. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Initially got prescription pain- killer from doctor	96	97	93
Doctor prescribed drug more often	10	10	9
Doctor prescribed drug less often	14	12	18
Frequency stayed the same	66	71	51
Both (Vol.)	2	2	2
No opinion	4	1	12
Got prescription painkillers some other way	4	3	7
No opinion	-	-	-

Q13. (Ask if initially got painkiller Rx from a doctor/medical professional)
 When (your/their) doctor first prescribed these medications, did (your/their) doctor talk to (you/them) about (INSERT), or not? (Randomize items)

	Yes	No	No opinion	Unwtd. N
a. The possibility of addiction or dependence				
All	67	28	5	782
User	67	33	1	610
HH member	67	17	16	172
b. A plan for getting off of the medication				
All	31	60	9	782
User	34	63	3	610
HH member	24	51	25	172
c. Other ways to manage (your/their) pain besides these painkillers				
All	63	32	5	782
User	64	34	2	610
HH member	59	27	14	172
d. Avoiding alcohol or certain medications while taking these painkillers				
All	80	15	5	782
User	81	18	2	610
HH member	80	8	12	172
e. Possible side-effects associated with these painkillers				
All	73	23	5	782
User	73	26	1	610
HH member	72	14	13	172
f. Keeping (your/their) medications in a safe place so they're not misused by others				
All	69	26	6	782
User	70	28	1	610
HH member	65	18	17	172

Q11/Q13a. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Initially got prescription pain-killer from doctor	96	97	93
Doctor talked about possibility of addiction or dependence	64	65	62
Doctor did not talk about possibility of addiction or dependence	27	32	16
No opinion	5	1	15
Got prescription painkiller some other way	4	3	7
No opinion	-	-	-

Q11/Q13b. Combo Table based on total			
	All	User	HH member
Initially got prescription pain-killer from doctor	96	97	93
Doctor talked about a plan for getting off of the medication	30	33	22
Doctor did not talk about a plan for getting off of the medication	57	61	48
No opinion	8	3	23
Got prescription painkiller some other way	4	3	7
No opinion	-	-	-

Q11/Q13c. Combo Table based on total			
	All	User	HH member
Initially got prescription pain-killer from doctor	96	97	93
Doctor talked about other ways to manage pain	60	62	55
Doctor did not talk about other ways to manage pain	31	33	26
No opinion	5	2	13
Got prescription painkiller some other way	4	3	7
No opinion	-	-	-

Q11/Q13d. Combo Table based on total			
	All	User	HH member
Initially got prescription pain-killer from doctor	96	97	93
Doctor talked about avoiding alcohol or certain meds	77	78	74
Doctor did not talk about avoiding alcohol or certain meds	15	17	7
No opinion	4	2	11
Got prescription painkiller some other way	4	3	7
No opinion	-	-	-

Q11/Q13e. Combo Table based on total			
	All	User	HH member
Initially got prescription pain-killer from doctor	96	97	93
Doctor talked about possible side effects	70	70	67
Doctor did not talk about possible side effects	22	25	13
No opinion	4	1	13
Got prescription painkiller some other way	4	3	7
No opinion	-	-	-

Q11/Q13f. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Initially got prescription pain-killer from doctor	96	97	93
Doctor talked about keeping medications in a safe place	66	68	61
Doctor did not talk about keeping medications in a safe place	25	28	17
No opinion	5	1	15
Got prescription painkiller some other way	4	3	7
No opinion	-	-	-

Q14. (Ask if initially got painkiller Rx from a doctor/medical professional) Do you think (your/their) doctor provided enough information on the risk of addiction and other side effects associated with prescription painkillers, or do you think (your/their) doctor did not provide enough information?

	Enough information	Not enough information	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	76	21	4	782
User	78	20	2	610
HH member	70	23	8	172

Q11/Q14. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Initially got prescription pain-killer from doctor	96	97	93
Doctor provided enough information	72	75	65
Doctor did not provide enough information	20	19	21
No opinion	4	2	7
Got prescription painkiller some other way	4	3	7
No opinion	-	-	-

Q15. Since (you/they) began taking these painkillers most recently, (have/did) (you/they) ever (had/have) trouble (INSERT), or not? How about (INSERT ITEM)?

	Yes, had trouble	No, did not have trouble	Not applicable (Vol.)	No opinion
a. Getting a doctor to refill (your/their) prescription				
All	17	79	3	1
User	16	81	3	*
HH member	19	75	3	4
b. Getting a pharmacy to refill (your/their) prescription				
All	19	77	3	1
User	16	82	2	*
HH member	28	66	5	2
c. Getting insurance to pay for (your/their) painkillers				
All	13	82	3	2
User	12	85	3	1
HH member	17	74	5	4
d. Being able to afford (your/their) painkillers				
All	21	76	2	1
User	18	81	1	-
HH member	30	64	3	3

Q15a/b/c/d Summary Table -- Yes to any

All	44
User	41
HH member	52

Q16. (Ask if had trouble getting a doctor to refill Rx) Did (you/they) switch to a different doctor to try to keep taking these painkillers?

	Yes, (you/they) switched to a different doctor	No, (you/they) did not switch to a different doctor	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	30	67	2	118

Q17. (Ask if had trouble getting a doctor to refill Rx and switched to a different doctor) When (you/they) switched doctors, were (you/they) able to get a prescription to keep taking these painkillers, or not?

Q15a/Q16/Q17 Combo table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Had trouble getting a doctor to refill Rx	17	16	19
Switched to a different doctor as a result	5	5	6
Was able to get Rx to keep taking painkillers	3	3	4
Was not able to get Rx to keep taking painkillers	2	2	2
No opinion	*	*	-
Did not switch to a different doctor as a result	11	11	11
No opinion	*	-	1
Did not have trouble getting a doctor to refill Rx	79	81	75
Not applicable	3	3	3
No opinion	1	*	4

Q18. (Since [you/they] have been taking these painkillers have [you/they] ever taken)/(While [you/they] were taking these painkillers did [you/they] ever take), painkillers that were not prescribed specifically for (you/them) by (your/their) own doctor, such as medications obtained from a friend or family member, or some other way?

	Yes, taken painkillers not prescribed to (you/them)	No, have not taken painkillers that were not prescribed to (you/them)	No opinion
All	18	81	1
User	17	83	*
HH member	22	76	2

Q19. In general would you say (your/their) health is excellent, very good, good, only fair, or poor?

	----Excellent/very good/good				---Only fair/poor -			No opinion
	NET	Excellent	Very good	Good	NET	Fair	Poor	
All	54	5	16	32	46	27	19	*
User	57	7	19	31	42	25	17	*
HH member	44	2	9	34	55	32	24	*

Q20. And would you say (your/their) mental health is excellent, very good, good, only fair, or poor?

	----Excellent/very good/good				---Only fair/poor -			No opinion
	NET	Excellent	Very good	Good	NET	Fair	Poor	
All	69	19	19	31	31	21	10	*
User	72	22	22	28	28	20	8	*
HH member	61	9	13	39	38	24	14	*

Q21. Does any disability, handicap, or chronic disease keep (you/them) from participating fully in work, school, housework, or other activities?

	Yes	No	No opinion
All	70	29	*
User	70	30	*
HH member	71	28	1

Q22. Currently, (are you yourself/is your household member taking the strong painkillers) employed full-time, part-time, or not at all? Q23. Are (you/they):

	All	User	HH member
Full-time	23	23	25
Part-time	9	8	11
Not employed	67	69	61
Retired	19	20	16
A homemaker or stay at home parent	6	7	4
A student	2	2	2
Temporarily unemployed	6	6	6
On disability & can't work	30	33	25
Other (Vol.)	2	1	7
No opinion	*	1	-
No opinion	1	*	4

Q24. (Are you, yourself/Is your household member taking the strong prescription), now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan or do (you/they) not have health insurance at this time? (IF NECESSARY: A health plan would include any private insurance plan through (your/their) employer or a plan that (you/they) purchased (yourself/themselves), as well as a government program like Medicare or [Medicaid/Medi-CAL])?

	Covered by health insurance	Not covered by health insurance	No opinion
All	89	9	2
User	90	10	1
HH member	87	8	5

Q24a. (Ask if covered by health insurance) Which of the following is (your/their) MAIN source of health insurance coverage? Is it a plan through (your/their) employer, a plan through (your/their) spouse's employer, a plan (you/they) purchased (yourself/themselves) either from an insurance company or a state or federal marketplace, are (you/they) covered by Medicare or (Medicaid/[INSERT STATE-SPECIFIC MEDICAID NAME]), or do (you/they) get your health insurance from somewhere else?

	All	User	HH member
Plan through (your/their) employer	20	20	20
Plan through (your/their) spouse's employer	12	11	14
Plan (you/they) purchased (yourself/themselves)	8	8	8
Medicare	34	35	31
Medicaid	17	19	11
Through the military/VA/Tricare	2	2	3
Somewhere else	3	2	4
Plan through (your/their) parents/mother/father (Vol.)	2	2	2
No opinion	2	*	7

Q24/Q24a Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Covered by health insurance	89	90	87
Plan through employer	18	18	18
Plan through spouse's employer	10	10	12
Plan purchased yourself	7	7	7
Medicare	30	32	27
Medicaid	15	17	10
Through the military/VA/Tricare	2	2	2
Somewhere else	2	2	4
Plan through parents/mother/father (Vol.)	2	2	1
No opinion	2	*	6
Not covered by insurance	9	10	8
No opinion	2	1	5

Q25. How many different prescription drugs do (you/they) take?

	All	User	HH member
1-3 (NET)	36	35	41
1	15	14	17
2	11	11	11
3	10	9	12
4-6 (NET)	24	25	24
4	9	9	9
5	8	8	9
6	7	8	6
7 or more	30	32	23
No opinion	10	9	13

Q26. While taking prescription painkillers, (are/were) (you/they) taking any other prescription medications for anxiety or depression, or sleep problems, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
All	50	50	1
User	52	48	-
HH member	45	53	2

Q27. Do (you/they) have a prescription for Narcan or Naloxone in your home, a drug that can prevent people from dying if they are experiencing an overdose of a prescription painkiller, or not?

	Yes, have a Rx	No, do not have a Rx	No opinion
All	3	93	4
User	4	95	1
HH member	2	89	9

Q28. (Have/Did) (you/they) (tried/try) to manage (your/their) pain with any other pain medications, such as Aleve, Tylenol, or ibuprofen or Motrin, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
All	80	19	1
User	84	16	*
HH member	69	29	2

Q29. (Ask if tried to manage pain with non-narcotic painkillers) Was this before or after (you/they) started taking these strong prescription painkillers?

	Before	After	Started at the same time (Vol.)	Both before and after (Vol.)	No opin.	Unwtd N
All	41	27	4	28	1	649
User	41	26	4	29	1	522
HH member	41	29	3	24	3	127

Q28/Q29. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Tried to manage pain with non-narcotic painkillers	80	84	69
Before starting to take Rx painkillers	33	35	28
After starting to take Rx painkillers	21	22	20
Started at the same time (Vol.)	3	3	2
Both before and after (Vol.)	22	24	16
No opinion	1	1	2
Did not try to manage pain with non-narcotic painkillers	19	16	29
No opinion	1	*	2

Q30. (Have/Did) (you/they) (tried/tried) to manage (your/their) pain with other types of treatments such as physical therapy, acupuncture, or meditation, or not?

	Yes, have tried	No, have not tried	No opinion
All	68	32	*
User	69	31	*
HH member	64	36	1

Q31. (Ask if tried to manage pain with alternative treatments) Was this before or after (you/they) started taking these strong prescription painkillers?

	Before	After	Started at the same time (Vol.)	Both before and after (Vol.)	No opin.	Unwtd N
All	30	39	8	23	*	584
User	32	35	8	25	*	467
HH member	24	50	9	16	1	117

Q30/Q31. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Tried to manage pain with alternative treatments	68	69	64
Before starting to take Rx painkillers	20	22	15
After starting to take Rx painkillers	26	24	32
Started at the same time (Vol.)	6	6	6
Both before and after (Vol.)	15	17	10
No opinion	*	*	*
Did not try to manage pain with alternative treatments	32	31	36
No opinion	*	*	1

Q32. (Ask if tried to manage pain with either non-narcotic medications or other treatments) How effective, if at all, were the other ways (you/they) tried to manage (your/their) pain? Were they very effective, somewhat effective, not too effective or not at all effective?

	--- NET	Effective Very	---- Somewhat	--- NET	Not Effective Not too	--- Not at all	No opin.	Unwtd N
All	43	12	31	55	22	33	1	737
User	41	13	28	57	23	35	1	583
HH member	48	8	40	49	21	28	3	154

Q28/Q30/Q32. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Tried to manage pain with other approaches	91	94	83
Effective	39	39	40
Very effective	11	12	7
Somewhat effective	28	26	33
Not effective	50	54	40
Not too effective	20	21	17
Not at all effective	30	33	23
No opinion	1	1	2
Did not try to manage pain with other approaches/No opinion	9	6	17

Q33. Have (you/they) wanted to try other treatments, therapy or surgeries reducing (your/their) pain, but found that you could not afford the cost?

	Yes	No	No opinion
All	29	67	3
User	31	66	3
HH member	25	70	6

On a different topic...

Q34. How concerned, if at all, (are/were) you about side-effects (they may experience) from the prescription painkillers? Very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not at all concerned?

	--- NET	Concerned Very	---- Somewhat	--- NET	Not concerned Not too	--- Not at all	No opin.
All	54	30	24	45	17	28	*
User	49	27	23	50	19	31	1
HH member	67	40	27	33	12	21	*

Q35. (As far as you know,) Have (you/they) ever experienced any of the following side effects as a result of taking prescription painkillers? (RANDOMIZE ITEMS)

	Yes, have experienced	No, have not experienced	No opinion
a. Constipation			
All	54	42	4
User	55	44	1
HH member	50	38	12
b. Breathing problems			
All	16	81	3
User	15	84	1
HH member	19	73	7
c. Indigestion, dry mouth, or nausea			
All	50	48	3
User	50	49	1
HH member	48	45	6

Q36. (Ask if have experienced specified side effects) Have (you/they) taken medication to treat any side effects caused by the prescription painkillers (you/they) (are/were) taking, or not?

	Yes, have taken medication	No, have not taken medication	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	31	66	4	590
User	29	70	1	451
HH member	36	53	11	139

Q35a,b,c/Q36. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Experienced constipation, breathing problems, or dry mouth, indigestion, or nausea	71	72	70
Yes, have taken medication	22	21	25
No, have not taken medication	47	50	37
No opinion	3	1	8
Have not experienced side effects/No opinion	29	28	30

Now, thinking about the use of prescription painkillers more generally,

Q37. Which comes closer to your view on using prescription painkillers for more than a week to treat pain: (ROTATE OPTIONS)

	The risk of addiction outweighs the benefit of pain relief	The benefits of pain relief outweigh the risk of addiction	No opinion
All	30	63	6
User	25	68	6
HH member	43	50	6
U.S. Adults*	47	44	9

* Kaiser Family Foundation, Kaiser Health Tracking Poll (conducted November 15-21, 2016)

Q38. How easy or difficult do you think it is for people to get access to prescription painkillers that were NOT prescribed to them? Very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult, or very difficult?

	--- NET	Easy Very	---- Somewhat	--- NET	Difficult Somewhat	--- Very	No opinion
All	63	38	25	26	14	12	11
User	60	36	24	27	14	14	13
HH member	71	44	27	22	15	7	7
U.S. Adults*	71	37	33	27	17	10	3

* Kaiser Family Foundation, Kaiser Health Tracking Poll (conducted November 15-21, 2016)

Q39. How easy or difficult do you think it is for people who need prescription painkillers for medical purposes to get access to them? Very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult, or very difficult?

	--- NET	Easy Very	---- Somewhat	--- NET	Difficult Somewhat	--- Very	No opinion
All	39	19	20	57	31	26	5
User	36	16	20	59	30	29	5
HH member	45	26	19	52	34	18	3
U.S. Adults*	62	28	34	35	24	12	3

* Kaiser Family Foundation, Kaiser Health Tracking Poll (conducted November 15-21, 2016)

Q40. Next I'd like to ask you about (your/their) use of alcohol and other drugs, and I just want to remind you that your answers are completely anonymous. Do (you/they) drink alcohol, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
All	39	61	*
User	38	62	-
HH member	42	57	1

Q41. (Ask if drink alcohol) About how many drinks in an average week?

	<1	1	2	3	4	More than 4	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	19	23	11	11	6	28	3	308
User	24	23	12	8	4	29	*	236

Q40/41. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Drinks alcohol	39	38	42
<1	8	9	3
1	9	9	9
2	4	5	3
3	4	3	8
4	2	1	5
5+	11	11	10
No opinion	1	*	4
Does not drink alcohol	61	62	57
No opinion	*	-	1

Q42. (Ask if drinks alcohol) While taking prescription painkillers, did (you/they) ever drink alcohol, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	54	45	1	308
User	47	53	-	236

Q40/Q42. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Drink alcohol	39	38	42
Ever drinks with Rx painkillers	21	18	30
Does not drink with Rx painkillers	18	20	11
No opinion	*	-	1
Does not drink alcohol	61	62	57
No opinion	*	-	1

And thinking again about (your/their) use of prescription painkillers

Q43. Has a friend or family member ever suggested (you/they) stop taking these painkillers, or not?

	Yes	No	Yes I have (Vol.) (if HH member)	No opinion
All	31	69	*	1
User	26	74	-	-
HH member	43	54	1	2

Q44. How concerned, if at all, (are/were) you about (them) becoming addicted to these painkillers? Very, somewhat, not too, not at all?

	---	Concerned	----	---	Not concerned	---	No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	opin.
All	36	22	14	63	15	48	1
User	33	19	14	66	14	52	1
HH member	42	30	12	57	18	39	1

Q45. Do you think (you/they) (are/were) physically dependent on these painkillers, that is, (you/they) would find them very hard to quit, or not? (INTERVIEWER NOTE: if respondent says they would be hard to quit because of pain, code as yes, dependent)

	Yes, dependent	No, not dependent	No opinion
All	37	62	1
User	31	68	1
HH member	51	47	2

Q46. Do you think (you/they) (are/were) addicted to these painkillers, or not?

	Yes, addicted	No, not addicted	No opinion
All	28	71	1
User	23	76	1
HH member	40	59	1

Q45/Q46. Combo Table based on total

	Yes, addicted or dependent	No, not addicted/dependent/No opinion
All	39	61
User	34	66
HH member	54	46

Q47. (Ask if addicted) Did (you/they) seek help or treatment for addiction, or not?

	Yes, (you/they) sought treatment	No, (you/they) did not seek treatment	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	36	62	2	209
User	37	61	1	130

Q48. (Ask if addicted and did not seek treatment for addiction) Have (you/they) considered seeking help or treatment for addiction, or not?

	Yes, have considered	No, have not considered	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	17	81	1	135

Q46/Q47/Q48. Combo Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
Addicted to Rx painkillers	28	23	40
Sought treatment	10	9	14
Did not seek treatment	17	14	25
Yes, have considered seeking help/treatment	3	2	5
No, have not considered seeking help/treatment	14	12	20
No opinion	*	-	1
No opinion	*	*	1
Not addicted to Rx painkillers	71	76	59
No opinion	1	1	1

Q49. Did (you/they) ever give any of (your/their) painkillers to a family member or friend, or not?

	Yes, have given painkillers to family or friend	No, have not given painkillers to family or friend	No opinion
All	15	83	1
User	14	86	-
HH member	19	78	4

Q50. Some people have reported that they believe other people have used or taken some of their prescription painkillers. Have you ever known or suspected that someone else was using, taking, or selling (your/their) strong prescription painkillers, or have you not thought this?

	Yes, have known/suspected	No, have not thought this	No opinion
All	22	77	1
User	20	80	*
HH member	28	68	4

Now, more generally,

Q51. How closely have you been following news about the prescription painkiller addiction epidemic in the U.S.? Did you follow this story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?

	--- NET	Closely Very	---- Fairly	--- NET	Not closely Not too	--- Not at all	No opin.
All	56	26	29	44	21	24	-
User	55	26	29	45	19	25	-
HH member	56	27	30	44	24	19	-
U.S. Adults*	57	24	33	43	25	18	*

* Kaiser Family Foundation, Kaiser Health Tracking Poll (conducted November 15-21, 2016)

Q52. How much, if any, do you blame each of the following for the prescription painkiller addiction epidemic? Do you blame (INSERT) a lot, some, not too much, or not at all? (RANDOMIZE ITEMS)

	--- NET	A lot/some A lot	-- Some	-- Not too much/not at all- NET	Not too	Not at all	No opin.
a. The government							
All	42	21	21	55	12	43	3
User	40	18	21	58	11	47	3
HH member	49	28	21	48	15	34	3
U.S. Adults*	44	16	29	54	23	30	2
b. Doctors who prescribe painkillers							
All	57	27	31	41	11	29	2
User	54	23	31	44	10	34	2
HH member	66	36	31	31	15	16	3
U.S. Adults (n=599)*	69	29	41	30	16	14	1
c. Law enforcement							
All	16	7	10	81	13	68	2
User	17	7	11	80	10	70	3
HH member	14	6	8	84	20	64	2
U.S. Adults (n=599)*	28	8	20	71	22	49	1
d. People who use painkillers							
All	63	31	31	35	12	23	3
User	61	30	31	35	12	24	3
HH member	65	35	31	33	12	21	1
U.S. Adults (n=599)*	68	29	38	31	18	13	1
e. Drug companies							
All	52	30	21	46	8	38	2
User	47	27	20	51	8	43	2
HH member	65	39	26	34	10	24	1
U.S. Adults (n=603)*	60	35	25	38	15	24	1
f. Pharmacies and pharmacists							
All	16	6	10	83	15	69	1
User	15	5	10	85	13	72	1
HH member	19	7	12	80	20	61	1
U.S. Adults (n=603)*	28	8	20	70	29	41	2
g. Hospitals							
All	32	10	22	66	16	50	2
User	27	9	19	71	16	55	2
HH member	44	14	29	55	18	37	2
U.S. Adults (n=603)*	43	10	33	55	27	28	2

* Kaiser Family Foundation, Kaiser Health Tracking Poll (conducted November 15-21, 2016)

Q53. (Ask items a-d if half sample A; Ask items e-i if half sample B) For each of the following, please tell me how effective, if at all, you think it would be in reducing the abuse of prescription painkillers. First/Next, would (INSERT) be very effective, somewhat effective, not too effective, or not at all effective in reducing the abuse of prescription painkillers? (RANDOMIZE ITEMS)

	--- NET	Effective Very	---- Somewhat	--- NET	Not Effective Not too	--- Not at all	No opin.	Unwtd N
a. Public education and awareness programs								
All	73	33	40	25	12	13	2	405
User	72	33	38	26	11	15	2	312
U.S. Adults*	86	46	39	14	8	6	1	599
b. Increasing access to addiction treatment programs								
All	80	42	38	16	6	10	4	405
User	80	43	36	17	6	11	3	312
U.S. Adults*	85	47	39	14	9	4	1	599
c. Monitoring doctors' prescription painkiller prescribing habits								
All	71	37	34	26	10	15	4	405
User	69	38	32	26	9	17	5	312
U.S. Adults*	83	44	39	15	8	7	2	599
d. Increasing pain management training for medical students and doctors								
All	83	47	36	14	5	9	3	405
User	82	50	32	15	4	11	3	312
U.S. Adults*	89	55	34	10	6	5	1	599
e. Encouraging people who were prescribed painkillers to dispose of any extras once they no longer medically need them								
All	71	46	24	26	8	19	3	404
User	73	49	24	24	6	17	3	310
U.S. Adults*	68	38	30	31	12	19	1	603
f. Putting warning labels on prescription drug bottles that explain the risk of addiction								
All	51	25	26	47	15	33	2	404
User	50	27	23	48	15	33	2	310
U.S. Adults*	52	24	28	48	18	30	1	603
g. Increasing research about pain and pain management								
All	85	51	33	13	4	8	3	404
User	81	50	31	15	5	11	3	310
U.S. Adults*	85	46	39	14	7	7	2	603
h. Reducing the social stigma around addiction								
All	55	25	30	38	12	26	7	404
User	54	23	31	39	11	28	6	310
U.S. Adults*	62	29	33	34	14	20	4	603

i. Government limits on the amount of drugs that can be produced								
All	47	22	24	49	13	36	4	404
User	47	24	23	48	13	35	5	310
U.S. Adults*	47	19	29	51	21	30	2	603

* Kaiser Family Foundation, Kaiser Health Tracking Poll (conducted November 15-21, 2016)

Q54. How concerned are you that efforts to decrease the number of people abusing prescription painkillers will make it MORE difficult for (you/them) to get prescription painkillers (if [you/they] needed them again)? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned or not at all concerned?

	NET	Concerned Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	No opin.
All	68	40	28	32	15	17	1
User	67	44	23	32	13	19	1
HH member	70	28	42	30	19	11	-

Q55. Do you think prescription painkiller abuse makes a person more likely or less likely to use heroin or other illegal drugs, or do you think it doesn't make much of a difference?

	More likely	Less likely	Doesn't make much of a difference	No opinion
All	50	4	40	6
User	46	4	43	7
HH member	61	2	31	5
U.S. Adults*	58	2	36	4

* Kaiser Family Foundation, Kaiser Health Tracking Poll (conducted November 15-21, 2016)

Q56. Which do you think is more addictive, (prescription painkillers) or (heroin), or do you think they are about equally addictive? (ROTATE ITEMS IN PARENTHESES)

	Rx painkillers	Heroin	Equally addictive	No opinion
All	4	43	42	11
User	3	45	40	12
HH member	6	37	49	7
U.S. Adults*	6	29	60	6

* Kaiser Family Foundation, Kaiser Health Tracking Poll (conducted November 15-21, 2016)

Next, I have just a few questions we will use to describe the people who took part in our survey..

RSEX. Are you male or female?

	Male	Female	Other (Vol.)	No opinion
All	48	52	-	-
User	47	53	-	-
HH member	50	50	-	-

Gender of Opioid User

	Male	Female	Other (Vol.)	No opinion
All	46	53	-	*
User	47	53	-	-
HH member	46	54	-	1

Q57. What is your age? Q58. Could you please tell me if you are between the ages of?

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	No opinion
All	15	32	36	18	*
User	11	32	39	19	-
HH member	25	33	28	14	*

Age of Opioid User

	<18	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	No opinion
All	*	12	32	36	20	*
User	-	11	32	39	19	-
HH member	1	15	31	30	23	*

Q59. Are you?

	All	User	HH member
Single, that is never married	23	23	23
Single, living with a partner	10	8	14
Married	38	36	44
Separated	5	6	3
Widowed	9	9	7
Divorced	15	18	7
No opinion	*	-	1

Q60. Are you, yourself, of Hispanic or Latino background, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Spanish background?

	Yes	No	No opinion
All	11	88	2
User	11	87	2
HH member	9	89	2

Q60a. (Ask if Hispanic) Were you born in the United States, the island of Puerto Rico, or in another country?

Q61. Do you consider yourself white, black or African American, Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander, mixed race or some other race?

	All	User	HH member
White	73	72	75
Black or African American	11	11	9
Asian/Chinese/Japanese	1	1	-
Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native	3	4	*
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	*	*	-
Mixed	6	5	10
Other	4	4	3
No opinion	3	3	4

Race Summary Table based on total

	All	User	HH member
White non-Hispanic	70	68	74
Black non-Hispanic	10	11	7
Hispanic	11	11	9
Other (NET)	8	8	8
Asian	1	1	-
Native American	3	4	*
Native Hawaiian	*	*	-
Mixed	4	3	7
Other	*	*	*
No opinion	2	3	1

Q62. What is the last grade of school you completed?

	All	User	HH member
HS grad or less (NET)	48	51	41
Less than high school graduate	17	18	12
High school graduate	32	33	29
Some college (NET)	31	31	30
Some college	29	29	28
Technical school/Other	2	2	2
College grad + (NET)	21	18	28
Graduated college	14	13	18
Graduate school or more	6	5	10
No opinion	*	*	1

Q63. In politics today, do you consider yourself a (Republican), a (Democrat), an Independent, or what?

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	Other/None	No opinion
All	25	30	32	8	6
User	24	32	32	7	5
HH members	26	26	32	9	7

INCOME. Which of the following CATEGORIES best describes your total annual household income before taxes, from all sources? Q64. Could you tell me if your total annual household income is less than \$50,000, \$50,000 but less than \$100,000, or over \$100,000?

	All	User	HH member
Less than \$50K (NET)	61	65	48
Under 20 thousand dollars	22	27	9
20 to under 35 thousand	24	24	26
35 to under 50 thousand	13	14	13
<\$50K unspecified	1	1	*
\$50K-\$99.9K (NET)	25	21	37
50 to under 75 thousand	16	14	20
75 to under 100 thousand	10	7	17
\$50-\$99.9K unspecified	*	*	*
\$100K or more	11	10	12
No opinion	3	3	3

L-1 (Ask if landline sample) Now thinking about your telephone use. . . Does anyone in your household including yourself, have a working cell phone?

	Yes	No	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	78	22	-	266

C1 (Ask if cell phone sample) Now thinking about your telephone use, is there at least one telephone INSIDE your home that is currently working and is not a cell phone?

	Yes	No	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	38	62	*	543

L1/C1. Combo table based on total

	Landline only	Both LL and Cell	Cell phone only	No opinion
All	5	48	46	*

C3. (Ask if cell phone sample or HH has a cell phone) How many different cell phone numbers do you personally answer calls on?

	None	1	2	3	4 or more	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	8	79	9	2	2	1	776

C3a. (Ask if landline sample or HH has a landline phone) How many telephone numbers does your household have that I could have reached you on? Not extensions, but different telephone numbers, not counting cell phones?

	None	1	2	3	4 or more	No opinion	Unwtd N
All	6	80	9	2	2	1	526

Region

	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
All	17	21	36	25
User	16	21	38	25
HH member	21	21	31	27

Metro Status

	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Unknown
All	25	51	22	2
User	25	50	22	2
HH member	25	51	21	2

*** END ***

METHODOLOGICAL DETAILS

The *Washington Post*/Kaiser Family Foundation Survey Project is a partnership combining survey research and reporting to better inform the public. The *Post-Kaiser Survey of Long-Term Prescription Painkiller Users and Their Household Members*, the 30th in this series was conducted by telephone October 3 - November 9, 2016, among a representative random national sample of 809 adults age 18 and over who they themselves, or a household member, have taken strong prescription painkillers for a period of two months or more¹ at some time in the past two years, other than to treat pain from cancer or terminal illness. Interviews were administered in English and Spanish, combining random samples of both landline (n=266) and cellular telephones (n=543).

Sampling, data collection, weighting and tabulation were managed by SSRS in close collaboration with *The Washington Post* and Kaiser Family Foundation researchers.

The SSRS Omnibus survey (detailed below) estimates that about seven percent of adults in the U.S. have either themselves used strong prescription painkillers in the past two years for two months or more, other than to treat pain from cancer or terminal illness (five percent), or have a household member that has (two percent). Due to the low-incidence of this study population, the sampling was designed to increase efficiency in reaching this group by using the following sample sources:

1. **Cell and Landline Phone Random Digit Dialing (RDD) (n=354)**: The dual frame landline and cellular phone sample was generated by Marketing Systems Group (MSG) using RDD procedures. Interviewers calling landline phone numbers asked to speak with an adult currently at home on a random rotation. Interviews calling cellular phones interviewed the person answering the phone after verifying eligibility.
2. **Respondents Previously Completing Interviews on the SSRS Omnibus Survey (n=455)**. Weekly, RDD landline and cellular phone surveys of the general public were used to identify eligible respondents. Individuals who had previously indicated on the SSRS omnibus survey that they fit the eligibility criteria for this study were re-contacted.

Regardless of the sample source, all respondents were screened to verify that they have taken a strong prescription painkiller for a period of two months or more in the past two years or have a household member who has, other than to treat pain from cancer or terminal illness. If a respondent indicated that both themselves and a household member qualified, they completed the questionnaire about their own

¹ A time period of two months or more was selected to focus on those whose use may be at odds with current government guidelines around prescription painkillers use.

personal use. The screening questions are identified at the beginning of this document as S3 through S5.

A multi-stage weighting design was applied to ensure an accurate representation of the population of long-term strong prescription drug users and their household members. The first stage of weighting involved corrections for sample design, including accounting for non-response for the re-contact sample. In the second weighting stage, demographic adjustments were applied to account for systematic non-response along known population parameters. No reliable administrative data were available for creating demographic weighting parameters for this group. Therefore, demographic benchmarks were derived by compiling a sample of all respondents interviewed on the SSRS Omnibus survey between August 18, 2016 and November 9, 2016 (N=15,944) and weighting this sample to match the national adult population based on the 2016 U.S. Census Current Population Survey March Supplement parameters for age, gender, education, race/ethnicity, region, phone status, and population density. This sample was then filtered to include respondents qualifying for the current survey (N=1,122), and the weighted demographics of this group were used as post-stratification weighting parameters for the total sample (including age by gender, education, race/ethnicity, region, population density, self or household member prescription painkiller user, and phone status).

All sampling error margins and tests of statistical significance have been adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, which is 1.6 for this survey. The design effect is a factor representing the survey's deviation from a simple random sample, and takes into account decreases in precision due to sample design and weighting procedures. Sample sizes and margin of sampling errors for key groups are shown below; other subgroups are available by request. Note that sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error in this or any other public opinion poll.

Group	N (unweighted)	Margin of sampling error (percentage points)
Total	809	±4
Interview type		
Personal user	622	±5
Household interview	187	±9
Among those personally using:		
Report being addicted or dependent	200	±9
Do not report being addicted or dependent	422	±6

This questionnaire was administered with the exact questions in the exact order as appears in this document. If a question was asked of a reduced base of the sample, a parenthetical preceding the question identifies the group asked. Current users were asked the questions in the present tense, indicated where applicable in the first part of the parenthetical text within the question. Past users were asked the

questions in the past tense and read the language in the second half of the parentheses. In addition, those personally using were asked the questions directly about their use, whereas household members were asked about the user in most cases, as indicated in the questions.

Since some of the questions could be sensitive and due to the nature of the survey content, interviewers were given specific instructions on how to cope with respondents who seemed agitated or distressed by the questions, including offering resources to which respondents could turn for support.

The *Washington Post* and the Kaiser Family Foundation each contributed financing for the survey, and representatives of each organization worked together to develop the survey questionnaire and analyze the results. Each organization bears the sole responsibility for the work that appears under its name. The project team from the Kaiser Family Foundation included: Mollyann Brodie, Ph.D., Bianca DiJulio, and Bryan Wu. The project team from *The Washington Post* included: Scott Clement and Emily Guskin. Both *The Washington Post* and the Kaiser Family Foundation public opinion and survey research are charter members of the [Transparency Initiative](#) of the American Association for Public Opinion Research.

Please note: (1) Table percentages may not add to 100 percent due to rounding. (2) Values less than 0.5 percent are indicated by an asterisk (*). (3) "vol." indicates that a response was volunteered by respondent and not an explicitly offered choice. (4) Data aren't shown if the number of respondents asked a question (the unweighted N) is less than 100.

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