



## Hydrocodone and Oxycodones Lead U.S. General Workforce Positives, Outranked Only by Marijuana, According to Quest Diagnostics Drug Testing Index(TM)

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### Hydrocodone and oxycodones remain most detected prescription opiates in U.S. general workforce Random drug tests for hydrocodone and oxycodones find nearly double the positives than pre-employment screening

MADISON, N.J., Oct. 11, 2011 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ --

American workers continue to use prescription opiates at relatively high levels, according to Drug Testing Index(TM) (DTI) data released today by Quest Diagnostics Incorporated (NYSE: DGX), the world's leading provider of diagnostic testing, information and services. Hydrocodone and oxycodones remain the most detected prescription opiates in the U.S. general workforce, with 1.3% and 1.1% positivity rates, respectively, in the first half of 2011. Compared to 2005 levels, oxycodones are 96% higher (0.56% vs. 1.1%) and hydrocodone 47% higher (0.88% vs. 1.3%) in positive prevalence.

According to Drug Testing Index data from urine drug tests, only marijuana, at 2.0% in the first half of 2011, holds a positivity rate higher than hydrocodone (1.3%) and oxycodones (1.1%). This ranking is consistent with 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health self-reported survey findings recently released by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, showing marijuana as the top drug associated with initiation of illicit drug use and pain relievers as second in ranking.

"The use and misuse of prescription opiates continue to capture national attention," said Dr. Barry Sample, Quest Diagnostics Director of Science and Technology for Employer Solutions. "The findings of this study reinforce the need for businesses to develop and communicate clear policies around both the medical and non-medical use of these drugs, especially for their safety-sensitive workers. Empowering employees to perform duties safely, act appropriately when they perceive risk, and understand clearly the consequences of non-medical use of these drugs and of being found to have violated their employer's drug policy all play an important role in worker and public safety."

Random drug testing and post-accident testing detected dramatically more positives for prescription opiates than pre-employment drug testing from January 2011 through June 2011 in the U.S. general workforce. Pre-employment screening revealed a 0.85% positivity rate for hydrocodone and a 0.65% positivity rate for oxycodones. However, random drug test positivity was nearly double, at 1.6% and 1.2%, respectively. Post-accident testing for hydrocodone and oxycodones continue to reveal dramatically higher rates of positivity at 3.7% and 1.8%, respectively.

"Prescription opiates are effective for managing pain and have been shown to improve patients' quality of life," said Jon R. Cohen, M.D., Quest Diagnostics Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer. "However, when used outside of a prescription and without the guidance of a physician, these powerful and highly addictive drugs can present serious health dangers to those who misuse them, and serious risks to workplace and public safety."

Recent government efforts to address the national epidemic of non-medical use of prescription drugs include the recent U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency's (DEA) "take-back" initiative in April, which collected more than 188 tons of prescription medications nationwide, and the upcoming National Prescription Drug Take Back Day scheduled to take place later this month on October 29th.

For more information on the Quest Diagnostics Drug Testing Index, visit [www.QuestDiagnostics.com/DTI](http://www.QuestDiagnostics.com/DTI).

#### About Quest Diagnostics

Quest Diagnostics is the world's leading provider of diagnostic testing, information and services that patients and doctors need to make better healthcare decisions. The company offers the broadest access to diagnostic testing services through its network of laboratories and patient service centers, and provides interpretive consultation through its extensive medical and scientific staff. Quest Diagnostics is a pioneer in developing innovative new diagnostic tests and advanced healthcare information technology solutions that help improve patient care. Additional company information is available at: <http://www.QuestDiagnostics.com>.

#### Tables Follow

##### Percent Testing Positive for "Expanded Opiates" - Urine Drug Tests

(For General U.S. Workforce, as a percentage of all tests for "Expanded Opiates")  
(More than 270 thousand tests from January 2011 to June 2011)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Jan - Jun 2011
Codeine	0.22%	0.20%	0.19%	0.20%	0.21%	0.17%	0.20%
Morphine	0.45%	0.37%	0.43%	0.43%	0.48%	0.42%	0.42%
Hydrocodone	.88%	.97%	1.2%	1.1%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
Hydromorphone	.47%	.54%	0.74%	0.73%	0.82%	0.71%	0.70%

##### Percent Testing Positive for Oxycodones (Oxycodone and/or Oxymorphone) - Urine Drug Tests

(For General U.S. Workforce, as a percentage of all tests for Oxycodones)  
(More than 280 thousand tests from January 2011 to June 2011)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Jan - Jun 2011
Oxycodones	0.56%	0.64%	0.88%	0.83%	1.0%	1.0%	1.1%

**Percent Testing Positive for Marijuana - Urine Drug Tests**

(For General U.S. Workforce, as a percentage of all such tests)

(More than 2.4 million tests from January to June 2011)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Jan - Jun 2011
Marijuana	2.5%	2.4%	2.3%	2.1%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%

For more information on the Quest Diagnostics Drug Testing Index, visit [www.QuestDiagnostics.com/DTI](http://www.QuestDiagnostics.com/DTI).

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