



Displayed as:
Concurrent Use of Opioids and BZDs

Measure

Description

- This measure was developed by the Pharmacy Quality Alliance ([PQA](#)) to monitor performance on the percentage of patients with concurrent use of both opioids and benzodiazepines.
 - Concurrent use is defined as overlapping days supply for an opioid and a benzodiazepine for 30 or more cumulative days.
- Using pharmacy and medical claims data, patients are considered eligible for the denominator based on the following criteria:
 - 18 years or older on the first day of the measurement year and continuously enrolled
 - Patients qualify with two or more prescription claims for opioids filled on two or more separate days with a cumulative days supply of 15 or more days
- Patients qualify for the numerator when there are two or more unique fills for benzodiazepines with concurrent use of opioids for 30 or more cumulative days.
- Pharmacists should consider patient and prescriber outreach to reduce patients using this combination of medications.



Did You Know?*

- More than 40 people die every day from overdoses involving prescription opioids
- One in four patients are receiving long-term opioid therapy in primary care settings
- Nearly 2 million Americans aged 12 or older either abused or were dependent on prescription opioids in 2014
- The CDC reported opioids were associated with the most pharmaceutical-related overdose deaths in 2010 at 75.2% followed by benzodiazepines at a rate of 29.4%.
- Concurrent use of benzodiazepines with an opioid can place an individual at risk for severe respiratory depression and can lead to death.



Calculation

NUMERATOR =

Patients with concurrent use of both opioids and benzodiazepines for 30 or more cumulative days during the measurement period

DENOMINATOR =

Patients who receive two or more prescription claims for opioids filled on two or more separate days with a cumulative days supply of 15 or more days during the measurement period

Exclusions

- Patients with a cancer diagnosis
- Injectable formulations of Opioids and benzodiazepines
- Products with buprenorphine as a single agent or in combination products
- Fentanyl transdermal patch

* https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdf/guidelines_at-a-glance-a.pdf

<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prescription-Drug-Coverage/PrescriptionDrugCovContra/Downloads/Concurrent-Use-of-Opioids-and-Benzodiazepines-in-a-Medicare-Part-D-Population-CY-2015.pdf>

