

Buprenorphine/Naloxone Abuse and Diversion: Film Rates are Less than Tablet Rates

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Background

- Buprenorphine and buprenorphine / naloxone sublingual formulations sometimes are diverted for illegal sale and abused.
- The Researched Abuse, Diversion and Addiction-Related Surveillance (RADARS[®]) System collects product-specific data about diversion and abuse of prescription opioids.
- Previous reports showed differences in diversion and abuse rates between formulations, but observation periods were short.
- This study presents cumulative data about diversion and abuse rates of buprenorphine sublingual formulations.

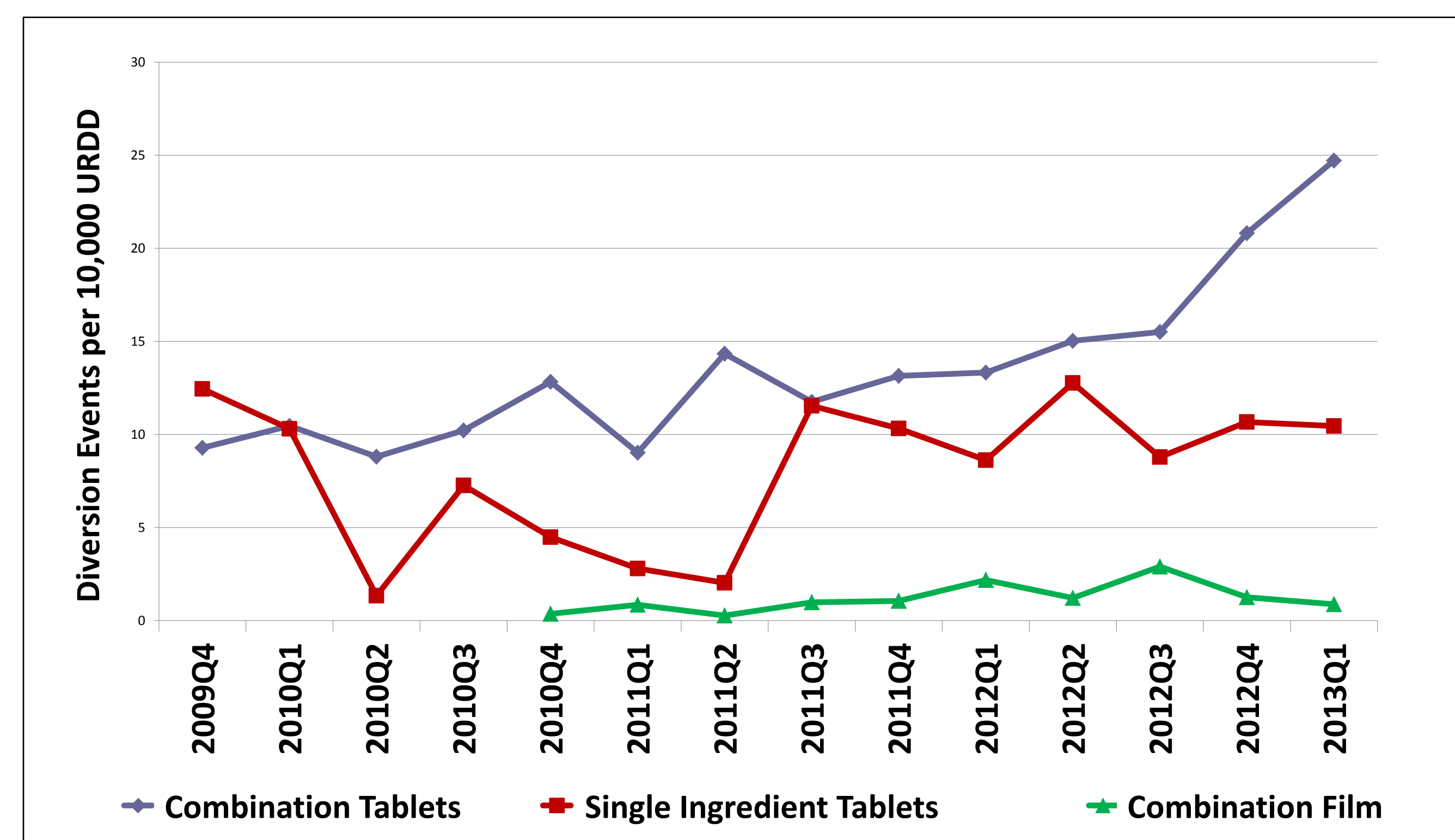
Methods

- Quarterly data were obtained from the RADARS System Drug Diversion, Opioid Treatment (OTP) and Survey of Key Informants' Patients (SKIP) Programs
 - Drug Diversion Program: October 2010 – March 2013
 - Treatment programs (OTP and SKIP): April 2011 – March 2013
- Reports about buprenorphine tablets, buprenorphine/naloxone tablets and buprenorphine/naloxone film were analyzed.
- The Drug Diversion Program collects data from 250 police agencies in 50 US states and the District of Columbia
 - A case in the Drug Diversion Program is a new law enforcement investigation involving a buprenorphine sublingual product
- The treatment programs (OTP and SKIP) collect confidential survey data from patients entering substance abuse therapy
 - Patients report all drugs used "to get high" in the past month
 - OTP: 73 federally certified treatment programs in 33 states
 - 83% of eligible subjects participate
 - SKIP: 125 substance abuse treatment practices in 50 states
 - > 90% of eligible subjects participate
- To account for wide variation in prescribing between formulations and over the 21-month study period, event ratios (rates) were calculated based on the number of patients filling prescriptions for each formulation in a covered geographic area (Unique Recipients of a Dispensed Drug, URDD)

Results

Drug Diversion Investigations

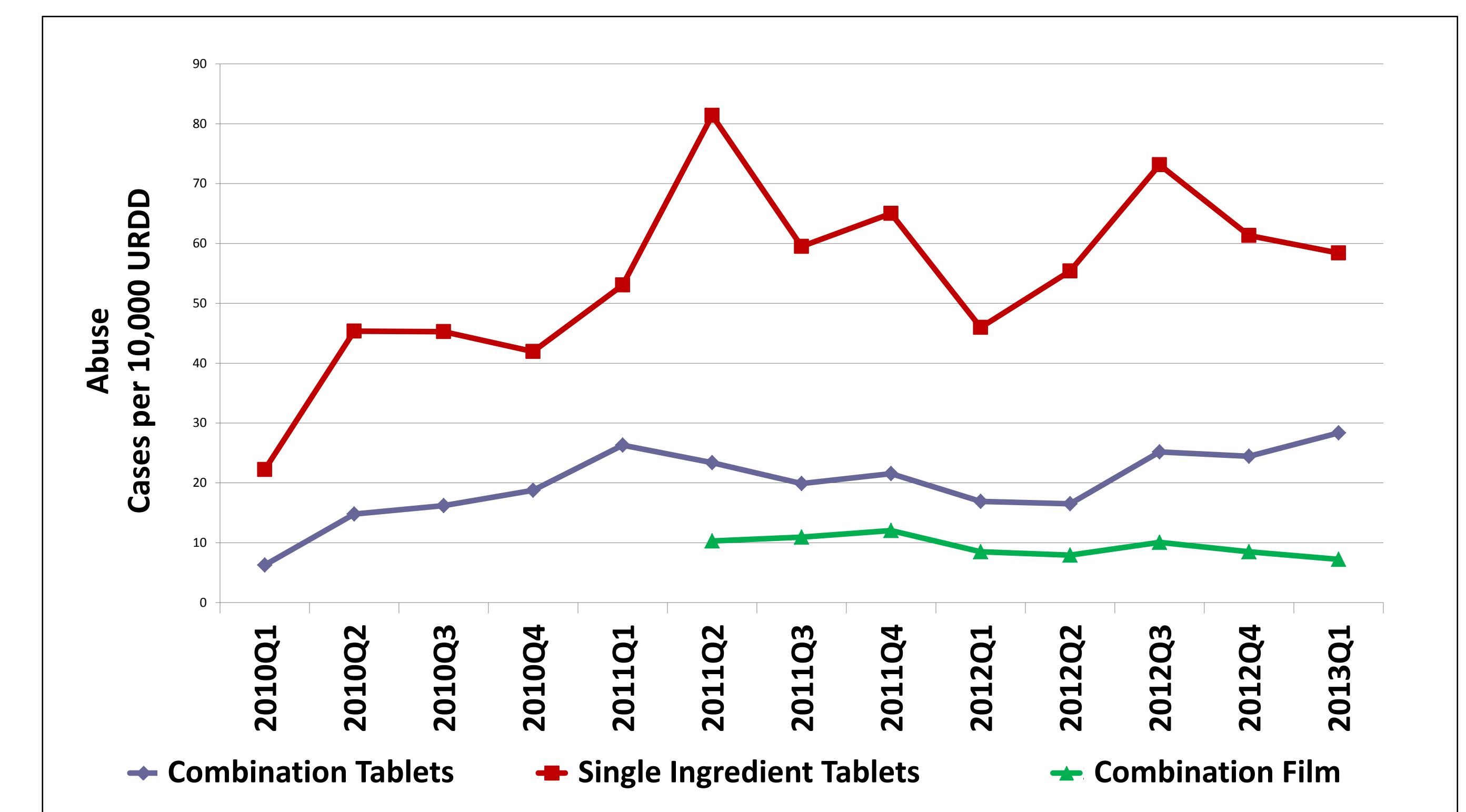
Based on 1,505 diversion investigation reports



	Rate Investigations per 10,000 URDD	95% CI	Rate Ratio	95% CI	Significance
Combination Tablets	13.6	12.8 – 14.5	10.6	9.0 – 12.4	P < 0.0001
Single Ingredient Tablets	8.7	7.6 – 9.8	6.7	5.5 – 8.2	P < 0.0001
Combination Film	1.3	1.1 – 1.5	Reference		

Past-Month Abuse Endorsements

Based on 5,293 abuse endorsements



	Rate Endorsements per 10,000 URDD	95% CI	Rate Ratio	95% CI	Significance
Combination Tablets	21.3	20.3 – 22.3	2.3	2.2 – 2.5	P < 0.0001
Single Ingredient Tablets	61.8	59.2 – 64.6	6.8	6.3 – 7.3	P < 0.0001
Combination Film	9.1	8.7 – 9.6	Reference		

Limitations

These data do not include generic buprenorphine/naloxone tablets, which were introduced in February 2013.

Funding / Disclosures

Research funded by Reckitt Benckiser Pharmaceuticals.

The Denver Health and Hospital Authority, a Colorado governmental entity, has research and/or consulting agreements with Reckitt Benckiser Pharmaceuticals and the manufacturers of several generic buprenorphine sublingual products.

Conclusions

Diversion and abuse rates for buprenorphine and buprenorphine/naloxone tablets consistently exceed those of buprenorphine/naloxone sublingual film.



Operation of the RADARS System is supported in part by NIH / NCATS Colorado CTSI Grant Number UL1 TR000154. Contents are the authors' sole responsibility and do not necessarily represent official NIH views, nor those of the University of Colorado.

