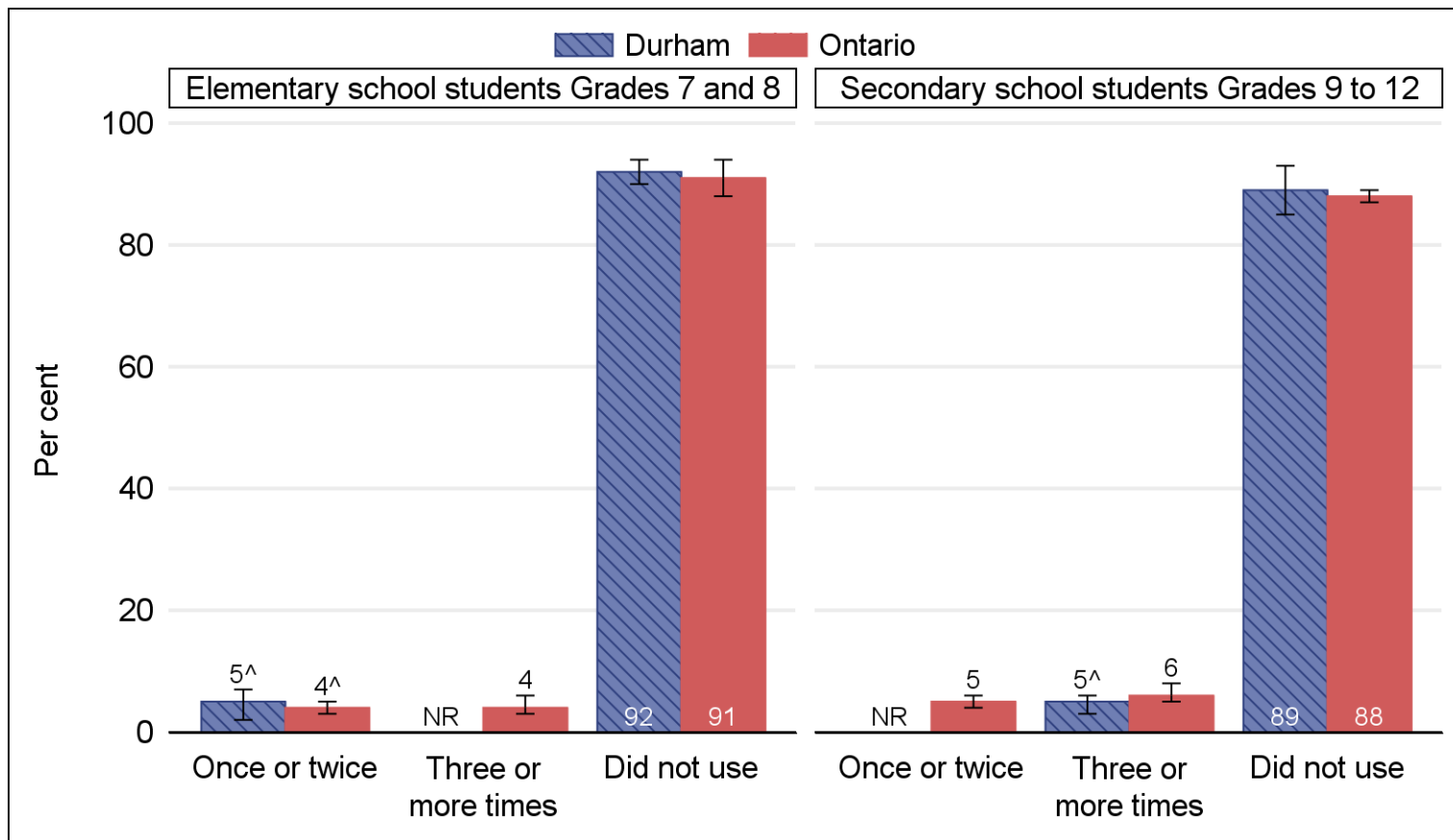


Quick facts:

# Percentage of students using opioid pain relief pills non-medically in the past year, 2016-2017



Release date: March 2018



**Notes**

Results were weighted and sex-by-grade adjusted to the Ontario 2014-2015 student enrollment.

Error bars represent the 95 per cent confidence intervals around the percentage. The true or actual percentage falls within the range of values, 95 out of 100 times. Categories may not sum to 100% as item non-response is not presented in the results above.

<sup>^</sup> Interpret with caution as the coefficient of variation (CV) is between 16.6 and 33.3 per cent, inclusive.

NR - Unreliable and not releasable as the CV is greater than 33.3 per cent.

Source: Public Health Monitoring of Risk Factors in Ontario – Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Study (OSDUHS), 2016-17.

## Summary

One in 10 (10%) Durham Region secondary school students and 8% of elementary school students reported using prescription opioid pain relievers non-medically in the past year. This was similar to Ontario.

One-quarter (24%) of Durham Region students (grades 7 to 12) reported that it was very easy or fairly easy to get prescription pain relief pills if they wanted them and 9%<sup>^</sup> reported getting them most often from a parent or sibling. Fourteen percent (14%<sup>^</sup>) of Durham Region students felt that taking them when not prescribed posed slight to no risk of harming themselves (results not shown in figure).

## Questions

In the LAST 12 MONTHS, how often did you use PAIN RELIEF PILLS (such as Percocet, Percodan, Tylenol #3, Demerol, Dilaudid, OxyNeo, codeine) WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION or without a doctor telling you to take them? (We do not mean regular Tylenol, Advil, or Aspirin that anyone can buy in a drugstore.)

- 1 or 2 times
- 3 to 5 times; 6 to 9 times; 10-19 times; 20-39 times, 40 or more times
- Used without a prescription, but not in the last 12 months; Never used without a prescription in lifetime; Don't know what pain relief pills are

How easy or difficult would it be for you to get prescription pain relief pills if you want some – WITHOUT going to a doctor?

- Probably impossible; Very difficult; Fairly difficult; Fairly easy; Very easy; Don't know

If you used these types of pain relief pills in the last 12 months WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION or without a doctor telling you to take them, who did you get them from?

- Never used these pills without a prescription in lifetime; Did not use these pills without a prescription in the last 12 months; Got them from a parent or a brother/sister; Got them from someone else I live with; Got them from a friend; Got them from someone else I know; Got them from a party; Got them from someone at a bar/club; Got them from someone on 'the street'; Got them from another source not listed here; Don't remember

How much do you think people RISK HARMING THEMSELVES physically or in other ways if they take a prescription pain reliever pill that was not prescribed for them?

- No risk; Slight risk; Medium risk; Great risk; Don't know

## Survey methods

The Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) targets students, Grades 7 to 12, enrolled in the public and catholic regular school system. The OSDUHS uses a two-stage (school, class) stratified (region and school type) cluster sample design, and oversampling in PMO-participating public health units. The survey is self-administered in the classroom, taking, on average, 35 minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and anonymous. Students, 17 years old and younger, absent or without signed consent forms on the day of the survey do not participate.

This survey excluded groups, such as street youth and dropouts, in which health behaviours such as healthy eating, physical activity, drug use, etc. may be underestimated. In addition, self-reporting may result in under-reporting whether from social desirability or recall bias. For a detailed description of the OSDUHS, visit the [CAMH website](#).

## Data analysis

Data were analyzed using SAS 9.4. For 2016-2017, the analysis was based on a design of 17 strata (7 geographical strata for elementary schools and 10 for secondary schools), 214 schools, 764 classes and 11,435 students. Variables accounting for the probability of selection, stratification and clustering were used when analyzing the data. The final sampling weight was based on each regional stratum's sex-by-grade structure according to the provincial population structure.

Differences in two percentages may be clinically important. However, when error bars overlap, the difference cannot necessarily be interpreted as real or statistically significant.

## Acknowledgement

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For more information, contact Durham Region Health Department at 1-800-841-2729, by fax at 905-666-6241 or by visiting the [Durham Region website](#).