

Changing Routes of Administration of Opioids

- When changing routes of administration, an equianalgesic table is a useful guide for initial dose selection
- Significant first-pass metabolism necessitates larger oral or rectal doses to produce analgesia equivalent to parenteral doses of the same opioid
- Equivalence dosing recommendations represent consensus from limited available evidence:
 - These recommendations are guides only
 - Individual patients may require doses to be adjusted

Equianalgesic Doses of Opioid Analgesics		
Oral/Rectal Dose (mg)	Analgesic	Parenteral Dose (mg)
100	Codeine	60
–	Fentanyl	0.1
15	Hydrocodone	–
4	Hydromorphone	1.5
2	Levorphanol	1
150	Meperidine	50
10	Methadone	5
15	Morphine	5
10	Oxycodone	–

An equianalgesic table such as this one (adapted from Levy) can be used:

1. On the horizontal axis to switch routes of administration
2. On the vertical axis to switch between opioids

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