

To provide a standard from which all DAWN data is interpreted, DAWN statistics are reported in terms of specific drug abuse "mentions" involved in a hospital emergency room or drug-related deaths. Since DAWN accepts from one to six substances per episode, the drug mentions are equal to or exceed the number of episodes.

The ratio of propoxyphene emergency room mentions relative to all drug mentions in DAWN has remained essentially constant over the past three years, ranging from 2.4 percent in 1975 to 2.2 percent of all drug mentions in 1978.

In terms of frequency of being noted in emergency room reports, propoxyphene ranked seventh in 1975, 1976 and 1977. The next year, 1978, propoxyphene ranked eighth because phencyclidine came into more prominence. The substances mentioned more often than propoxyphene in DAWN emergency room reports are: diazepam (e.g., valium), alcohol (in combination with other drugs), heroin, aspirin, amitriptyline formulations (non-scheduled antidepressants), and flurazepam (a Schedule IV hypnotic related to diazepam).

Propoxyphene ranks third behind heroin and alcohol (in combination with other drugs) in terms of drugs associated with deaths in DAWN ME reports. Based on information received since January 1975 from medical examiners who have consistently reported to DAWN, the number of propoxyphene-related deaths is as follows: