

That propoxyphene-related suicides are understated in DAWN is suggested by the following additional considerations:

1. On a city-by-city basis, the incidence of all propoxyphene-related deaths (both suicidal and nonsuicidal) correlates equally well with the overall suicide rate and the propoxyphene-associated suicide rate for those cities.
2. An evaluation of DAWN medical examiner laboratory data provided on the IMS DAWN tapes indicates that, in a large proportion of the cases not classified as suicide, concentrations of propoxyphene were detected that required the ingestion of amounts that could not reasonably have been taken accidentally.
3. The demographic profiles of propoxyphene medical examiner cases align well with those of explicit drug suicide. Propoxyphene emergency room case demographics also align well with independent studies of those attempting drug suicide.

Laboratory analyses are of prime importance in reaching a decision as to whether a death is an "accident" or a