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evaluate the current laboratory techniques used to detect, identify and quantitate the drug and its metabolites in biological specimens. The results of the study, which involved eighteen forensic toxicologists, medical examiners and coroners, was published in the Journal of Forensic Sciences in 1976. The principal findings indicated that during the period 1970-75, the number of deaths involving propoxyphene increased each year and at a faster rate than total drug deaths. About half of the 1,022 cases studied were suicides. The deceased were not part of the illegal drug abuse population and had no particular propensity for the use of heroin or narcotics, but were a particular medical population with a marked tendency to hypochondria, chronic minor illnesses and emotional problems, and misuse of a variety of prescription drugs and alcohol. It was confirmed that propoxyphene can be a dangerous drug when misused, deliberately or accidentally, but most especially in combination with alcohol and/or other central nervous system depressant drugs. From a toxicology perspective propoxyphene appeared to be no more dangerous than many other potent drugs available, and that typical of the modern forensic toxicology scene it presented as a mixed drug, combination phenomenon. The report also described the potential importance of propoxyphene-metabolite toxicity and noted the need for improved laboratory methods to detect and quantitate the drug.

Since this report other papers have been published which corroborate the findings, and corollary data have been developed through Medical