

# Resetting e-prescriptions for opioids helps curb use: study

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(HealthDay)—Lowering the default number of opioid painkillers in

electronic prescription systems reduced overall use of the drugs, a new study finds.

In electronic medical-record systems, prescriptions have a default number of pills. It's been suggested that reducing this number may help curb the use of addictive opioids, such as OxyContin.

In this study, researchers compared prescriptions for thousands of [surgery patients](#) before and after the default for opioid pills was lowered from 30 to 12.

After the change, the median number of opioid pills per electronic prescriptions fell from 30 to 20. Half got more pills, half got fewer.

Overall, [prescriptions](#) for 30 pills dropped from 40 percent before the change to 13 percent. Prescriptions for 12 pills rose from 2 percent to 25 percent.

The study, led by Dr. Alexander Chiu of the Yale School of Medicine, was published July 18 in the journal *JAMA Surgery*.

**More information:** The U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse has more about [prescription opioids](#).

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