



# Cut the count

## Campaign Results: Reducing Opioids after Surgery

The **Cut the Count** campaign was designed to help interdisciplinary surgical teams manage their patients' pain effectively while decreasing the dose and duration of opioids prescribed after surgery. The goal: To reduce postsurgical opioid prescribing by 30%.

Using their 2019/20 and 2020/21 Surgical Quality Improvement Plans, participating hospitals identified at least one surgical procedure to focus on and tracked opioid prescribing at discharge each year.\* ***Congratulations to participating surgical teams who met or exceeded their goals!***

### Featured Results

**41** participating teams committed to reducing postoperative prescribing while effectively managing their patients' pain

between April 1, 2019, and March 31, 2021

**49** opioid pills reduced per prescription at discharge, on average, across all targeted surgeries

between April 1, 2019, and March 31, 2021

**34%** reduction in number of opioid pills, prescribed at discharge, across all targeted surgeries

between April 1, 2019, and March 31, 2021

**659,334** estimated total reduction in the number of pills released into the public domain

between April 1, 2019, and March 31, 2021<sup>†</sup>

\*Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, year 2 of the campaign was shortened and ran between October 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021.

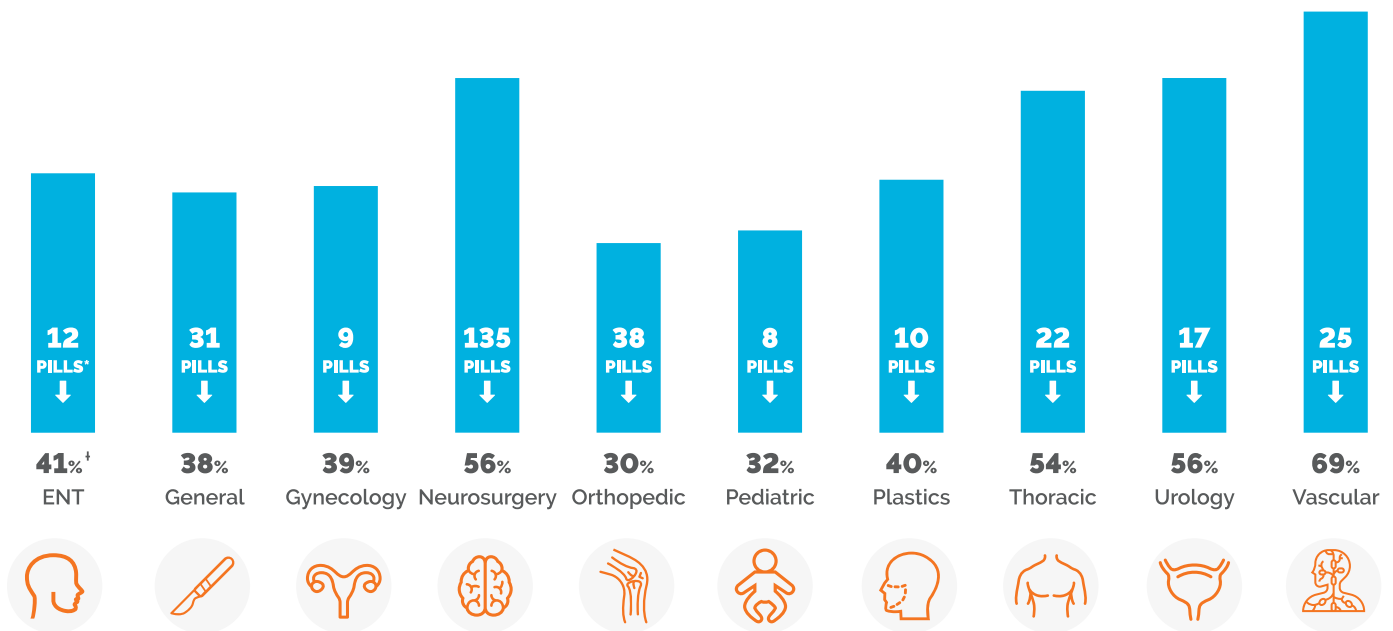
<sup>†</sup>This estimate was calculated by multiplying the average number of pills reduced by the number of surgeries performed in participating hospitals in one year. Data are self-reported. Note that the number of participating teams and the subspecialties of focus changed in year 2. This analysis combines year 1 and year 2 data.

Participating teams worked on the following change ideas tailored to their patients needs:

- Adopting a common prescribing protocol to prescribe the minimum amount of opioids required for the shortest duration possible (depending on the procedure)
- Using other forms of pain management (such as nonopioid medications and nonmedication strategies like physiotherapy, massage therapy, mindfulness, etc.)
- Talking to patients about safe opioid use and working with them to set reasonable expectations for pain and recovery

The province's surgical community recognized the important role surgeons can play in reducing opioid-related harms and took action.

## Opioid Reduction by Surgical Subspecialty



\* Number of opioid pills reduced per prescription at discharge, on average.

† Percent reduction in number of opioid pills prescribed at discharge.

Pain management continues to be a focus as we embark on our [Enhancing Surgical Recovery](#) campaign. More information as well as upcoming events will be posted to the Surgical Quality Improvement page on [Quorum](#). We encourage all hospitals to celebrate their success — *and keep the momentum going!*