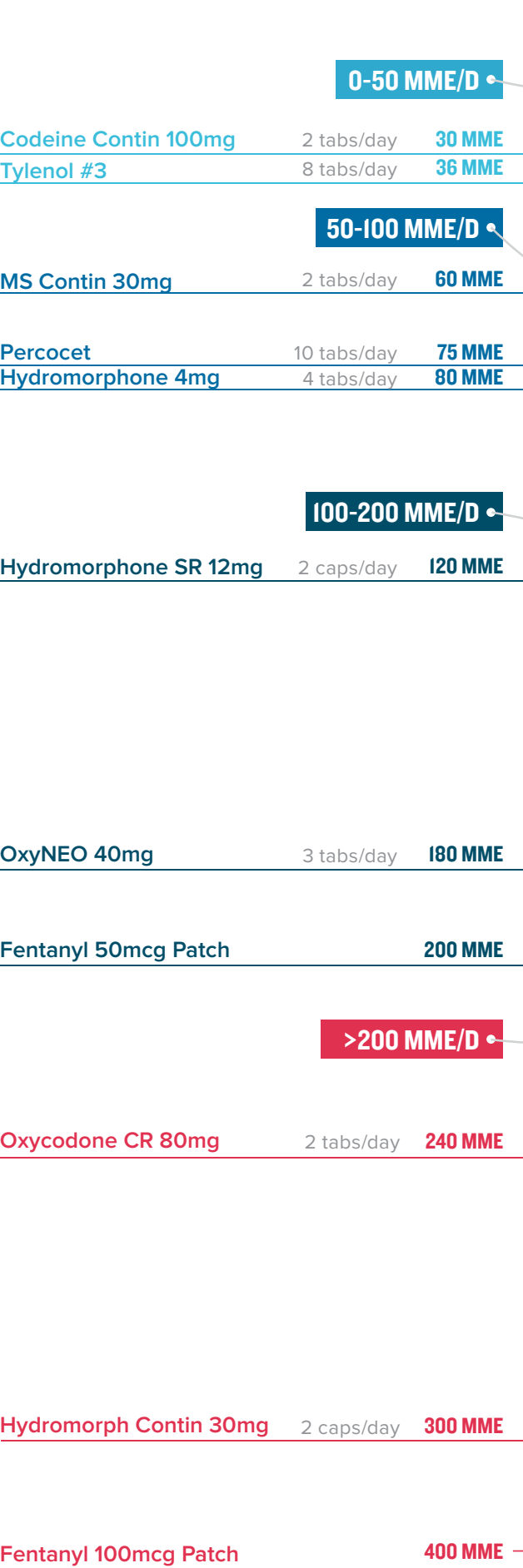


# NAVIGATING OPIOIDS FOR CHRONIC PAIN

Sometimes the best of intentions lead to devastating consequences. Canada and the U.S. are the two highest consumers of prescription opioids even though we don't have good evidence that they are effective for chronic pain. Since there are many different opioids used for the same purpose, we use **morphine equivalence** to compare how strong they are.

AS THE NUMBER OF MORPHINE MILLIGRAM EQUIVALENTS PER DAY (MME/D) INCREASES, THE HARMS ASSOCIATED WITH OPIOID THERAPY ALSO INCREASE.



## IS HIGH DOSE PRESCRIBING SAVING OR SINKING YOU?

There is **no safe dose** of opioids. Harms and complications can happen at any dose, but are less likely at lower MMEs/D.

There is up to a **5x increase** in overdose risk in this range as compared to lower doses. Guidelines recommend that prescribing above 90 MME/D be avoided.

There is up to a **9x increase** in overdose risk in this range as compared to lower doses. Overdoses that happen at doses greater than 100 MME/D are more likely to be **fatal**.

People on higher doses tend to have **higher rates of complications** like sleep apnea, generalized pain, addiction, low testosterone levels and disability from work. Most chronic pain can be managed well below 200 MME/D.