



THE TOP 12 CAUSES OF
NARCOTIC DISCREPANCIES

Investigating Under-Counts

Your reconciliation tells you that you're missing 100 Statex tablets.
On September 1st, you counted 85 Statex tablets; your perpetual inventory tells
you you should have 185 Statex tablets on hand.

Here are some handy tips for investigating under-counts.

Step One: Check All Orders Placed the Day of the Count (September 1st).



In this example, you find you placed an order for 100 Statex with your wholesaler on September 1st. The order arrived the following day. If you counted on September 1st after you placed the order, this may be where your discrepancy occurred.

Step Two: Check Any Narcotics Dispensed the Day of the Count (September 1st).

Was the count done during business hours? If so, were any narcotics dispensed after the count that day? You must account for all narcotics dispensed the day of your count. Failure to do so will result in missing items when you reconcile.



Step Three: Check Any Recently Expired or Destroyed Narcotics.



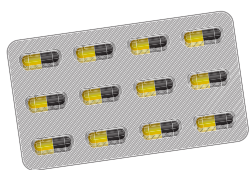
Ensure any expired or destroyed narcotics are entered in your dispensing software; if they have not, the drug will show as missing in your reconciliation.

Step Four: Be Mindful of Brand Switching, Which Can Cause Under- and Over-Counts.

Brand switching means billing for one drug but accidentally giving the patient a generic instead; this will cause an over-count in one drug that is equal to an under-count in the other.
E.g.: Drug 1 has a surplus of 30 tablets, while Drug 2 has a shortage of 30 tablets.



Step Five: Check All Blister Packs or Med Pouches.



Often pharmacies prepare these items before recording them in their dispensing software. In these cases, the drugs show up as missing inventory when doing a count; the discrepancy will equal the narcotics in the blister packs and/or med pouches.

Step Six: Watch for Missing Bottles.

If a bottle is on a shelf or in the safe, it can show up as missing in a count; check your work space for any missed inventory and full/partial bottles kept in other areas of the pharmacy.



Step Seven: When Out of Options, Consider Theft.



Theft is a sensitive topic, yet it's one of the main reasons for regular reconciliations; keeping a close eye on your inventory helps to discourage, discover and prevent theft or diversion.
If you've taken every logical step and are still coming up short, eliminate theft as the next possible cause; talk to your local and federal pharmacy regulatory bodies for tips on preventing theft.

Investigating Overcounts

Step One: Check Dispensing Records.

On occasion if a pharmacy is low on inventory, they'll dispense more of a certain medication than what is on-hand; this means that they owe the patient the remaining meds when they are in stock. If these situations are not properly accounted for, they can result in a negative on-hand number in your reconciliation. This means you have a surplus of the narcotic in question that will be corrected when the new stock is in.



Step Two: Watch for Brand Switching!

We've talked about how brand switching can cause under-counts, but what about over-counts? Brand switching occurs when you bill for one drug but accidentally dispense the generic instead. This will cause an under-count in one drug with a corresponding over-count in another.

Step Three: Check Pre-Billed Blister Packs or Med Pouches.

Sometimes blister packs and med pouches are pre-billed. If they're not removed from inventory right away, problems can arise. If you do a count with pre-billed blister packs unaccounted for, you will have a surplus or an over-count.



Step Four: Check for Accidental Over-Counts.

For example: if you have a large number of full bottles of a certain drug, you may multiply them to arrive at your count number quickly. If you find you have a large surplus at the end of your count, check to ensure your multiplication was correct.

Step Five: Check for Missing Dispensing Records.

In some cases, a medication dispensed to a patient may not get recorded right away; often the pharmacist is busy and will enter it into the dispensing software as soon as they are able. If you do a reconciliation before this occurs, it will show up as a surplus.



Reconcile Your Narcotics in Minutes with iApotheca

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