Drug potency

Definition: A quality of a drug that is the amount of a desired effect of the drug for a given dose and a given mode of administration.

Comment: Drugs may have different potencies for different drug effects. Effect of the drug on side-effects is not covered by this definition. If a drug has more than one effect that may be desired, it is necessary to specify what effect or effects are included in a given usage of the term.

Drug unit dose

Definition: A quality of a drug preparation that is the amount of the drug that is contained in that preparation.

Comment: This is not the same as dose received or dose that is potentially delivered by the preparation into the body. Drug unit dose as an attribute of a defined drug preparation (e.g. as in 4mg nicotine gum, 500mg paracetamol capsule)

Drug concentration

Definition: A quality of a drug preparation that is the concentration of the drug in the preparation.

Drug received dose

Definition: A process attribute of drug ingestion that is the amount of a drug that is ingested.

Comment: To be meaningful it is necessary to describe the ingestion process in terms of its duration and mode of ingestion. Ingestion in this case means entering body tissue. It does not include drug that is swallowed but not absorbed through the wall of the GI tract. This attribute depends on the concentration of the drug, the mode of administration, and the absorption process.

Addictiveness …

Addictiveness of a drug

Definition: An attribute of a drug that is a disposition of that drug to cause addiction to it in a population of users when ingested using a mode of administration within a range of received doses.

Comment: This is a quantitative entity that derives from the proportion of the population of users who become addicted and the level of addiction in those who become addicted. Inherently this is a not meaningful as addictivenessTo be meaningful the precise nature of this derivation needs to be specified.

Addictiveness of a product

Addictiveness of a drug preparation

Addictiveness of a behaviour

Definition: A process attribute of a behaviour that is the disposition of that behaviour to cause addiction to the behaviour in a population.

Comment: This is a quantitative entity that derives from the proportion of the population who become addicted and the level of addiction in those who become addicted. To be meaningful the precise nature of  this derivation needs to be specified. This includes any behaviour including drug-ingestion behaviour, so it does not just apply to what have been termed 'behavioural addictions' such as gambling.

Examples: Heroin injection is highly addictive in that a high proportion of people who inject heroin become highly addicted. Alcohol consumption is highly addictive in that while only a small proportion of people who consume alcohol become addicted, the level of addiction in these people is high.