

# Unused Opioids After Joint Replacement Surgeries: 72,146 Untaken Pills at Large in our Community

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# Unused Opioids After Joint Replacement Surgeries: 72,146 Untaken Pills at Large in our Community

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## Introduction

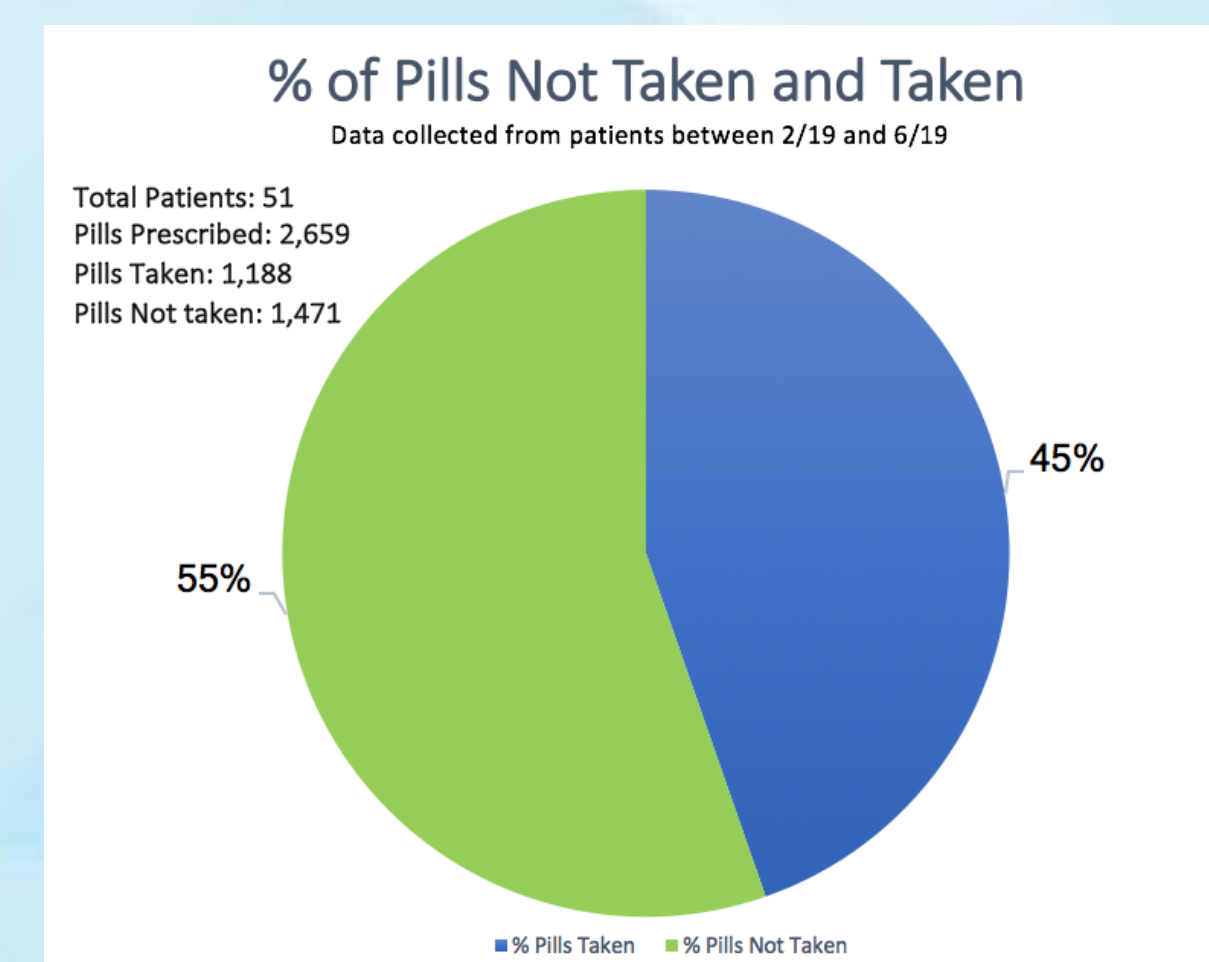
- In 2016, there were 42,000 opioid related overdose deaths, 16,800 of which were from a prescription opioid<sup>1</sup>
- Currently, more than 11 million people are misusing prescription opioids and at least 2.1 million have an opioid use disorder<sup>2</sup>
- This study set out to investigate opioid usage in the Orthopedic Surgery department of LVHN

## Methods

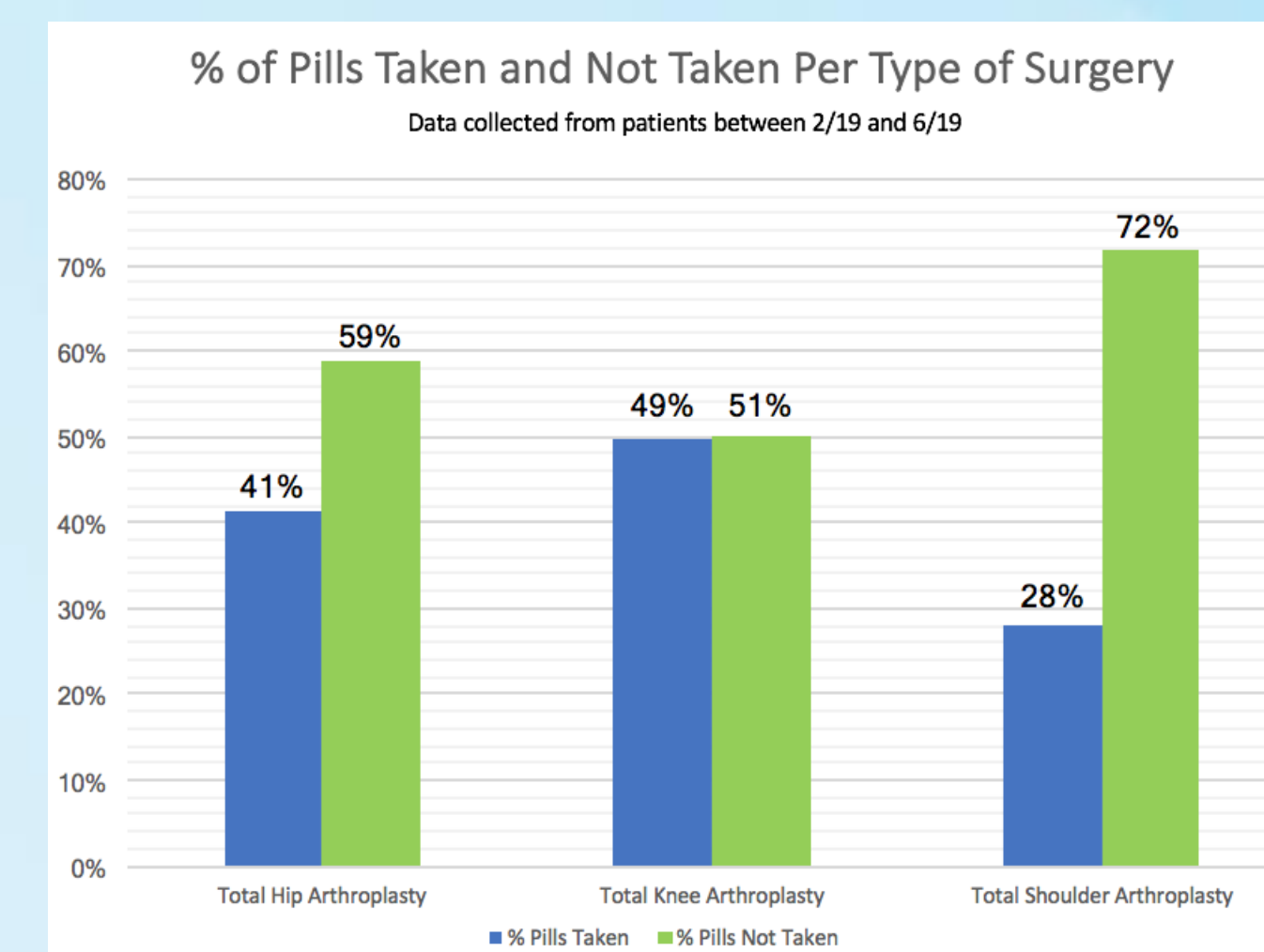
- 51 patients who underwent orthopedic surgeries were identified, and data was collected on the patients demographics, type of surgery, and number of opioids they received
- Transition of Care (TOC) nurses followed up with the patients in at least 3 waves of phone calls at; 1 day post-op, 2-3 weeks post op, and 5-7 weeks post-op
- During these calls, once the patients stated that they were finished taking their medication, data was recorded on how many pills each patient said they took

## Results

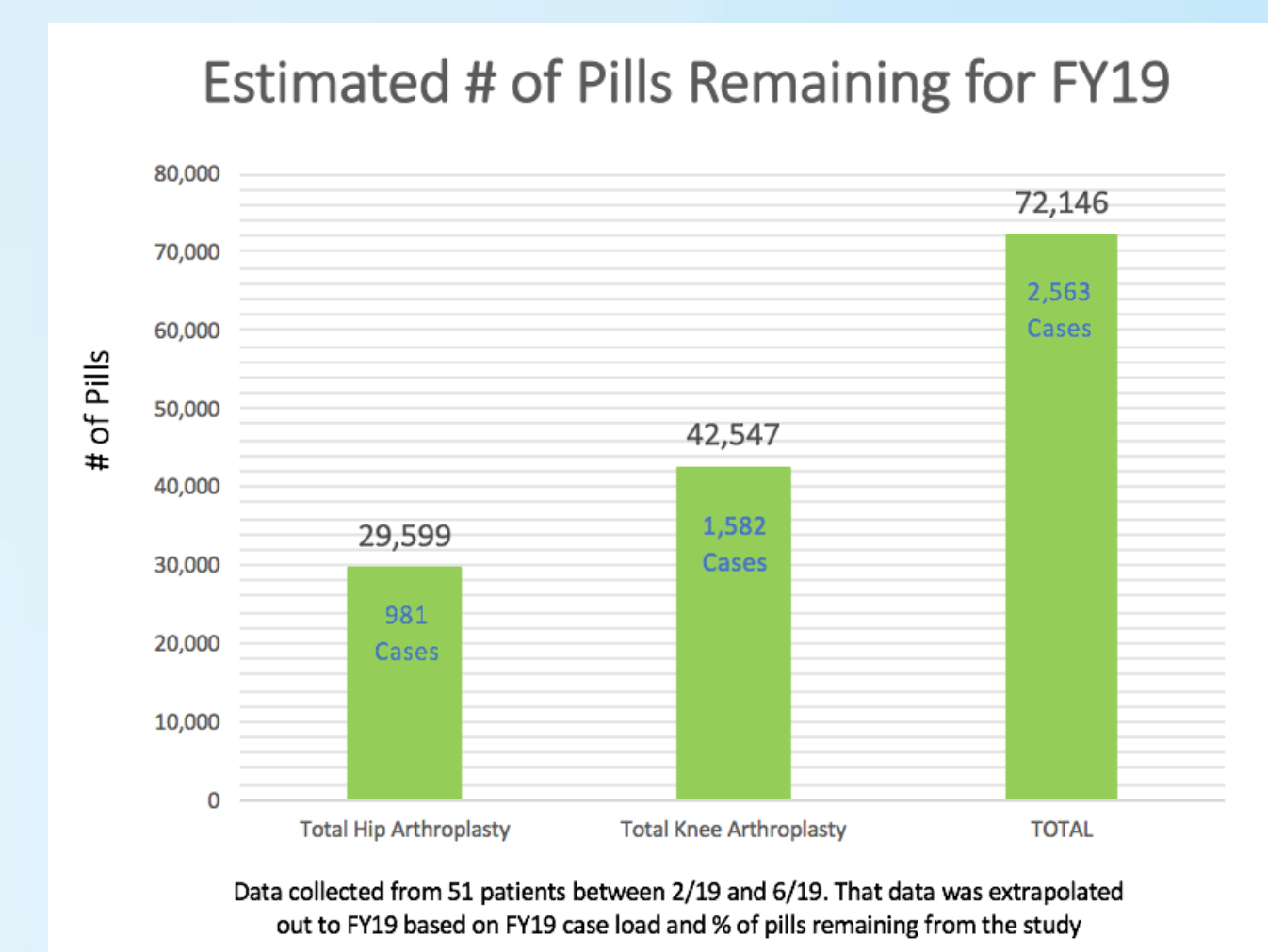
- Among the 51 patients; 2,659 opioids were prescribed, 1,188 pills were taken, and 1,471 pills were not taken



- For each type of surgery, on average, patients took less than half of their pills



- Extrapolating this study to FY19, 72,146 opioids would be prescribed and not taken, for THA and TKA patients alone



## Discussion

- This study showed there to be a concerning amount of pills not taken by patients
- While there have been great strides in reducing the usage of opioid drugs in the Network, there is still room for improvement
- “Weaning Sets”, which will send patients home with a smaller amount of medications, should be utilized more often
- Possible limitations of this study include response bias and the small sample size

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- Kelly Fitzpatrick, BSN, RN, CMSRN
- Kristen Cannalley, Medical Assistant

### References:

1. U.S Department of Health and Human Services. The Opioid Epidemic By the Numbers. <https://www.hhs.gov/opioids/about-the-epidemic/index.html>. Updated January 2019. Accessed July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019.
2. National Survey on Drug Use and Health. <https://nsduhweb.rti.org/respweb/homepage.cfm>. Accessed July 25<sup>th</sup> 2019.