

Impact of meteorological and social events on human-excreted contaminant loads in raw wastewater: From daily to weekly dynamics

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1	Impact of meteorological and social events on human-excreted contaminant
2	loads in raw wastewater: from daily to weekly dynamics
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25 Abstract

The temporal dynamics of the wastewater influent loads of 25 drug target residues (DTR, both pharmaceuticals and illicit drugs) was assessed during 84 consecutive days. This monitoring scale enables longer temporal patterns than weekday/weekend patterns to be explored. In this study, we focus on day to day variations and the potential statistical correlation of each DTR analyzed in order to better understand the potential forcings that lead to the load variation of DTRs (alone or in clusters). The weekly patterns based on the weekly loads of DTRs were also analyzed and the impact of social and meteorological events on their variations was investigated.

Two cold events occurred during the monitoring period and were associated with the highest loads of analgesics and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, as well as the lowest loads of stimulants. During the Easter holidays, a significant decrease in some year-long medication as well as analgesics was found, consistent with the demographic decrease within the catchment during this period. Lastly, a good correlation between the academic calendar and the loads of stimulants was found, emphasizing the overrepresentation of students in the consumption of recreational drugs.

This study furnishes new insights in order to better understand the variations in DTR loads in wastewater influents, beyond the weekday/weekend pattern and the seasonal effect. Further investigations remain necessary, especially a real-time monitoring of the population figures within the catchment in order to improve our understanding of these results.

43

44 **1. Introduction**

The occurrence of drug target residues (DTRs) of pharmaceutically active compounds and illicit drugs in numerous environmental compartments (Da Silva et al., 2011; Pal et al., 2013; Tamtam et al., 2008) raises serious concerns about their potential hazard for living beings (Brodin et al., 2013; Richmond et al., 2018). Hence, a significant part of the current literature focuses on both assessing the removal of organic contaminants in classical wastewater treatment plants (Subedi and Kannan, 2014; Thiebault et al., 2017a; Verlicchi et al., 2013), and on optimizing their removal based on tertiary treatments (Altmann et al., 2015; Rattier et al., 2014; Thiebault et al., 2016).

52 However, wastewater treatment plant influents (WWI) could also represent a tremendous source 53 of information, due to the link between their chemical composition and the excretion of various 54 chemical compounds by the population in the catchment (Castiglioni et al., 2014; Gracia-Lor et al., 55 2017a; Kasprzyk-Hordern and Baker, 2012). Several studies have demonstrated the consistency of 56 such analyses on illicit drugs and pharmaceutically active compounds in order to back-calculate 57 the consumption of the population (Baker et al., 2014; Jones et al., 2014; van Nuijs et al., 2009). 58 In the case of illicit drugs, this type of analysis reduces the uncertainty of classical consumption 59 studies based on sociological surveys (Baz-Lomba et al., 2016; Ort et al., 2014), even if ethical questions remain prominent (Lancaster et al., 2019). This new scientific discipline has been called 60 61 wastewater-based epidemiology and currently investigates not only chemicals consumed as 62 pharmaceuticals, but also passive exposure to other markers such as industrial chemicals and pyrethroid pesticides (Choi et al., 2018; Lopardo et al., 2019; Rousis et al., 2017b). 63

64 While analyses of passive exposure provide useful information about the chemical quality of the 65 environment (air, soil, water, etc.) (Rousis et al., 2017a), analyses of chemicals consumed as 66 pharmaceuticals are useful to determine the behavior of a target population (Causanilles et al., 67 2018; Gracia-Lor et al., 2017b). Many studies have been carried out to characterize this type of 68 specific behavior, especially from a geographical point of view, on a regional to a worldwide scale 69 (Nefau et al., 2013; Thomas et al., 2012; Vuori et al., 2014; Yan et al., 2019). As a result, a 70 significant amount of data is now available to distinguish different consumption behaviors around 71 the world, but few studies have focused on the temporal dynamics of human-excreted pollutants. 72 Among these temporal dynamics the weekly pattern of stimulants (*i.e.* cocaine, ecstasy) that are 73 significantly more excreted/consumed during the weekend than on weekdays is nevertheless well-74 established (Gatidou et al., 2016; Papageorgiou et al., 2016; van Nuijs et al., 2011). Beyond this 75 pattern, studies have especially focused on special events, such as sport events, in order to assess 76 the specific behavior associated with this type of event (Gerrity et al., 2011; Sodré et al., 2017), or 77 on the seasonality in the use of antibiotics or anti-influenza drugs (Azuma et al., 2013; Coutu et al., 78 2013; Golovko et al., 2014).

79 However, no studies have explored the daily variations in pharmaceutically active compounds and 80 illicit drugs, and the impact of external parameters on these daily loads. An initial exploration is 81 the recent study by O'Malley et al. (2019) which found a relationship between latitude, temperature 82 and the use of organic UV filters. Hence, in the present study, we propose to assess the external 83 forcings that could impact the daily/weekly evolution of the loads of 25 DTRs (both illicit drugs 84 and pharmaceuticals) which were analyzed in WWI during 84 consecutive days in 2016. Based on 85 the knowledge of some variations in the catchment (*i.e.* holidays, temperature) and intrinsic 86 variations in the WWI parameters, this study aims to advance our understanding of the temporal 87 dynamics of DTR loads during long term monitoring by: (i) characterizing the statistical correlation 88 between DTR loads, (ii) assessing the correlation between classical WWI parameters and DTR 89 loads and (iii) determining the impact of external forcings on DTR load variations.

90

2. Material and methods

91 **2.1. Sample collection and general setting**

WWI were collected each day during 84 consecutive days, between March 21st and June 11th 2016 92 93 except on March 31st, providing a set of 83 samples. Sampling consisted of a flow-enslaved composite with a sampling of 50 mL every 30 m³ of WWI between 0h00 and 23h59. This 94 95 corresponds to a mix of 167 samples per day for the mean flow value. The chemical parameters of 96 WWI during the study are given in Table S1. Among them, we focused especially on the daily 97 variations in chemical oxygen demand (COxD), suspended solids (SS) and total phosphorus (TP) 98 due to the greater number of analyses (n=24). Mean temperature values were retrieved from the 99 Météo-France database (www.meteofrance.fr). The exact emplacement of the investigated WTP 100 will not be disclosed in this study, in accordance with the request of the local authorities and ethical 101 guidelines (Hall et al., 2012; Prichard et al., 2014).

The same dataset was used as in our previously published paper which aimed to characterize the consumption of pharmaceuticals and illicit drugs within the catchment (Thiebault et al., 2017b). In the present article, the data processing focuses on the temporal dynamics rather than on the backcalculation of consumption.

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107 **2.2.Chemical Reagents**

Standards for acetaminophen (ACM), atenolol (ATE), bezafibrate (BZB), carbamazepine (CBZ), codeine (COD), diclofenac (DCF), ibuprofen (IBP), ketoprofen (KET), metoprolol (MET), oxazepam (OXA), salicylic acid (SCA), sulfamethoxazole (SUL), tramadol (TRA) and trimethoprim (TMP) were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich with a purity > 98%. The standards for 6-monoacetylmorphine (6MAM), amphetamine (AMP), benzoylecgonine (BZE), buprenorphine (BUP), cocathylene (CET), cocaine (COC), heroin (HER), 3,4-methylene-dioxy-Nmethylamphetamine (MDMA), methadone (METD), morphine (MOR) and 11-nor-delta-9hydroxytetrahydrocannabinol (THC) were purchased from LGC Standards. Extraction and separation solvents, methanol (MeOH) and acetonitrile (AcN) were purchased from Fisher-Scientific, assuming an analytical grade (purity up to 99.95 %).

118 **2.3. Sample Preparation**

2.5. Sample Preparation

After collection, WWI were filtered with glass-fiber filters (GF/F, Whatman) prior to solid-phase extraction (SPE). SPE was carried out using Chromabond HR-X cartridges (6 mL x 500 mg, Macherey-Nagel). Cartridges were conditioned with 6 mL of MeOH followed by 6 mL of ultrapure water. Then, the cartridges were filled with 250 mL of WWI prior to flushing with 6 mL of ultra-pure water before drying for 30 minutes under vacuum. Finally, elution of DTR was performed with 6 mL of MeOH before drying under nitrogen flow and storage at -10°C.

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2.4. Quantification and validation

The quantification and validation procedures were already presented in detail (Thiebault et al.,
2017b). The equipment and analytical procedures are detailed in the supplementary material.
Quantification performances are given in Table 1. Further information on the analytical setup can
be found in Table S2.

	DTR	DTR	Matrix Effect	Recovery Ratio	MDL	MQL	T :	Instrument Performance	
Abbreviation				± %SD (%)	ng.L ⁻¹	ng.L ⁻¹	Linearity -	Intra-day (%)	Inter-day (%)
Antibiotics									
SUL		Sulfamethoxazole	91 ±1.58	79.7 ± 9.00	0.2	0.5	0.9998	2.1	2.6
TMP		Trimethoprim	109 ± 0.43	71.4 ± 3.81	0.1	0.4	0.9999	2.8	1.5
NSAIDs									
IBP		Ibuprofen	108 ± 4.28	78.9 ± 3.63	0.9	2.8	0.9972	6.8	3.2
DCF		Diclofenac	188 ± 0.40	62.9 ± 2.00	0.3	0.8	0.9994	2.4	6.1
KET		Ketoprofen	123 ± 1.73	67.4 ± 5.36	0.6	1.9	0.9998	4.6	0.9

Analges	ics								
	SCA	Salicylic Acid	188 ± 0.70	22.1 ± 9.24	0.4	1.3	0.9997	2.1	1.1
	ACM	Acetaminophen	349 ± 0.29	99.6 ± 9.99	0.6	1.7	0.9998	4.6	3.1
Others									
	ATE	Atenolol	117 ± 1.38	68.3 ± 3.56	0.3	0.8	0.9998	2.8	1.8
	MET	Metoprolol	113 ± 1.67	79.4 ± 2.62	0.1	0.2	0.9998	2.4	1.4
	OXA	Oxazepam	168 ± 1.42	103.5 ± 1.15	2.3	6.4	0.9994	2.0	1.5
	CBZ	Carbamazepine	142 ± 0.48	101.1 ± 4.75	1.6	4.6	0.9975	1.0	3.2
	BZB	Bezafibrate	112 ± 2.79	80.5 ± 6.09	0.5	1.3	0.9998	3.1	2.9
	THC	THC-COOH	124 ± 2.51	43.6 ± 16.6	8.5	20.2	0.9987	3.4	4.2
Opioids	and derivatives								
	MOR	Morphine	108 ± 1.05	52.3 ± 5.14	3.1	8.9	0.9996	6.1	2.0
	6MAM	6-Acetylmorphine	171 ± 3.78	59.7 ± 4.72	1.0	2.8	0.9996	1.6	4.0
	HER	Heroin	112 ± 2.56	68.9 ± 6.72	6.4	17.3	0.9937	9.7	3.1
	METD	Methadone	235 ± 0.69	65.8 ± 13.6	2.2	7.8	0.9985	3.8	1.6
	COD	Codeine	111 ± 0.59	58.1 ± 2.88	0.5	1.4	0.9998	6.8	2.3
	BUP	Buprenorphine	241 ± 2.50	53.9 ± 12.4	0.8	2.6	0.9988	10.1	7.2
	TRA	Tramadol	171 ± 1.54	99.0 ± 2.46	2.1	6.5	0.9997	3.9	6.4
Stimular	nts								
	COC	Cocaine	80 ± 2.23	78.0 ± 5.47	1.6	4.9	0.9989	8.9	2.7
	BZE	Benzoylecgonine	109 ± 1.36	82.8 ± 3.15	1.8	5.4	0.9996	4.3	1.9
	CET	Cocaethylene	096 ± 1.54	83.6 ± 3.59	0.6	2.0	0.9996	6.6	2.6
	MDMA	Ecstasy	108 ± 0.47	72.0 ± 11.5	1.0	3.2	0.9996	5.6	3.8
	AMP	Amphetamine	105 ± 0.14	73.5 ± 9.42	1.6	4.6	0.9975	5.8	3.9

130Table 1: Analytical parameters and performance of the selected contaminants with NSAIDs for non-
steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, SD the standard deviation, MDL and MQL the method detection limit
and method quantification limit respectively

133

134 The three analytical runs (30 samples for each) were conducted at different times. The between-

run drift was also determined, by comparing the calibration curves and analyzing the same sample

136 in two different runs.

137 Relative standard deviation was determined by analyzing the same sample three times. SPE

138 recovery values were calculated for each compound by comparing the concentration of a standard

139 with and without SPE (at 0.2 and 50 μ g.L⁻¹ respectively). Matrix effect was assessed for each

140 compound by comparing the concentration of standards spiked in ultra-pure water and spiked in141 the WWI matrix. All further details can be found in Table 1.

142 **2.5. Processing of results**

143 Concentrations were converted into mass load (load) in order to take into account the irregularity144 of the flow. The load of each DTR in WWI each day was calculated as follows:

145
$$Load = 10^3 x C x F$$

146 with the load of DTR in g.day⁻¹, *C*, the concentration in μ g.L⁻¹, and *F*, the flow in m³.day⁻¹ 147 Heatmap, correlation matrix and pairwise *p*-values were performed using the packages corrplot 148 and FactoMineR of the R software (Lê et al., 2008). Statistical analyses were performed on 149 normalized load and raw load values. The Pearson correlation was used to assess both the 150 correlation matrix and *p*-values.

151

3. Results and Discussion

152 Hereafter, daily loads will be used to assess the statistical correlation between DTRs themselves or 153 with some classical WWI parameters. In order to enhance the statistical reliability of the 154 correlation, DTRs were grouped in 6 clusters based on their theoretical therapeutic use (except for 155 THC which is here considered as a daily-consumed compound in accordance with previous 156 studies). The six clusters are: Analgesics, which resulted from the addition of ACM and SCA loads, 157 Antibiotics from the addition of SUL and TMP, Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) 158 from the addition of DCF, IBP and KET loads, Opioids from the addition of COD, BUP, METD, 159 MOR, OXA and 6MAM loads, Others from the addition of ATE, BZB, CBZ, MET, OXA and 160 THC loads and Stimulants from the addition of BZE, CET, COC and MDMA loads.

161 In a second phase, loads will be presented in boxplots for each French calendar week (from Monday

162 to Sunday) of the monitoring period.

163 **3.1. Daily variations of DTRs**

Among the DTRs analyzed, HER (as DTR) and AMP are not shown in Figure 1, nor in the rest of the study because they were never detected. The statistical correlation between normalized daily loads of each DTR is presented in Figure 1. This presentation as a heatmap highlights the statistical correlation and justifies clustering the DTRs in several statistical groups.







<sup>From a clustering point of view, the four stimulants (i.e. COC, BZE, CET and MDMA) constitute
a distinct statistical group. This can be explained by the very weak correlation between these DTRs</sup>

and other compounds if we except the non-statistically significant correlation between COC and

MOR. Hence, stimulants exhibit a different daily pattern in comparison with other DTRs, largely
generated by the noticeable increase in their loads during weekends (Thiebault et al., 2017b). This
weekly pattern is the most significant for stimulants thus resulting in the constitution of this cluster.

176 This appears consistent with their use as recreational drugs, in comparison with other DTRs.

Among the other DTRs, the statistical clusters are not especially related to the therapeutic classes of DTR. For example, the most statistically significant cluster includes ACM, THC, KET, DCF and IBP (Figure 1), i.e. a cluster that includes one analgesic, all the three NSAIDs and one illicit drug. However, these DTRs are both highly consumed in the catchment area (Thiebault et al., 2017a, 2017b), and their daily loads seem to be impacted by the same forcings. This cluster is completed with METD and BZB, which are both year-long medications and their excretion pattern appears to be close to that of convenience DTRs such as ACM and IBP.

Based on this correlation plot, it is therefore difficult to distinguish between year-long medications such as BZB, MET, ATE and the use of painkillers such as ACM, SCA and IBP, which are occasionally consumed. The significant consumption of the latter appears to result in daily load variations that are comparable to those of year-long medication.

The daily loads of the two antibiotics, SUL and TMP, are significantly correlated (Figures 1 and S1). In order to assess the temporal dynamics of these two DTR, their daily load variations are plotted in Figure 2. The significant statistical correlation between the loads of SUL and TMP is obvious from Figure 2, and both DTRs were previously reported to have the highest loads amongst the DTRs analyzed (Thiebault et al., 2017b), resulting in a linear regression determination coefficient of 0.39 (Figure S1). This can be explained by the fact that these two compounds are often associated in a single medicinal product (Dan et al., 2013). There is a perfect fit between the 195 two curves throughout the monitoring period, except between 04/23 and 05/02. During this period,



196 the SUL load was significantly lower than expected.



199 This punctual absence of correlation was unexpected since SUL and TMP are consumed in 200 association. It could result from variations in the respective stability of these compounds during 201 their transport through sewers.



203 Figure 3: Daily loads of COC (red triangles) and BZE (blue circles)

204	COC and BZE are relevant DTRs to assess the co-evolution of their loads as BZE is the main
205	metabolite of COC and is considered as more stable than COC (McCall et al., 2016). During the
206	monitoring period, BZE loads were higher than those of COC, in agreement with the literature on
207	the subject (Ort et al., 2014; van Nuijs et al., 2009). However, the ratio between BZE and COC
208	was not constant throughout the monitoring period, as displayed in Figure 3. The loads of both
209	BZE and COC were very similar during the first few weeks but then a significant discrepancy
210	between the two can be observed. This increasing discrepancy indicates some variations in the
211	WWI composition that could impact the in-sewer stability of COC (which is more sensitive to
212	degradation than BZE as described by Gheorghe et al. (2008)) and simultaneously increases the
213	concentration of its metabolite BZE, whereas their excretion rate remains stable (Gracia-Lor et al.,
214	2016).

In order to verify this hypothesis and also to better constrain the origin of the variation in DTR loads, a correlation matrix was performed between therapeutic class loads and classical WWI parameter loads recorded during the study. The results are presented in Table 2.

218	Table 2: Correlation coefficients describe the statistical relationship between cumulative normalized loads
219	of each therapeutic class and normalized loads of several classical wastewater parameters, namely Chemical
220	Oxygen demand (CoxD), Suspended Solids (SS) and Total Phosphorus (TP). *, **, *** correspond to p-values
221	< 0.05, 0.01 and 0.001 respectively, n=24.

	Analgesics	Antibiotics	Others	Opioids	Stimulants	COxD	SS	TP
NSAIDs	0.79^{***}	0.32	0.67^{***}	0.40	-0.10	-0.25	-0.16	-0.21
Analgesics		0.23	0.61^{*}	0.39	-0.04	-0.07	-0.00	-0.15
Antibiotics			0.29	0.42	-0.57	-0.42	-0.39	-0.25
Others				0.26	-0.00	-0.50	-0.44	-0.56
Opioids					-0.18	-0.15	-0.02	-0.02
Stimulants						0.27	0.26	-0.03
COxD							0.89^{***}	0.88^{***}
SS								0.82***

²²²

223 Two clusters emerge from this correlation matrix. First, a very significant positive correlation is

found between TP, SS and COxD, indicating that the daily variations in these three classical

parameters are correlated. Then, NSAIDs, Analgesics and Others loads are also significantly correlated, indicating that several external forcings impact their daily variations. However, no correlation was found between the daily loads of DTRs and those of classical WWI parameters (Table 2). As a result, the daily variations in DTR loads are expected to be different from the variations in the operating conditions of the sewer system alone.

230 **3.3. Weekly variations of DTR loads**

Overall, the scientific literature seeking to improve the understanding of the temporal dynamics of DTRs in WWI has focused on the daily dynamics, and especially the weekday/weekend pattern. However, several forcings on these loads, such as meteorological or social events, may also present a weekly pattern. We therefore focus in this section on weekly variations, and especially those that are statistically significant.

236 *3.3.1.* Social and meteorological events in the catchment during the monitoring period

During the monitoring period, several social and climatic events with a potential weekly effect occurred. Weeks 14 and 15 were the Easter holidays (from school to university). According to official figures, the number of university students in the catchment is approximately 15,000 and accounts for ~ 20 % of the total catchment population (*i.e.* 70,000). The mobility of French people during holidays was assessed by a recent report (Houbian, 2010), which revealed that between 10 and 35 % of people are likely to go on holiday outside the catchment (the targeted area is not especially touristic).

Week 17 and the beginning of week 18 were the examination period at the university, followed by the end of the university year during week 21 (except for students who failed the first session).

From a meteorological point of view, the monitoring period was characterized by heavy rainfall

episodes during weeks 21 and 22 (Figure S2). This heavy rainfall period resulted in the mix of

rainwaters with wastewaters, although the sewer system is supposed to be unitary, due to leaks.

Hence, the WWI flow was strongly impacted by rainfall during weeks 21 and 22.

250 A precise calendar with each specific event is presented in Figure S3.

251 The temperature within the catchment increased regularly between March and June, which is

252 expected under such latitudes. However, during week 17, a cold snap occurred, resulting in

significantly lower mean temperatures during week 17 in comparison with weeks 16 and 18 (Figure

254 4).



Figure 4: Loads of therapeutic classes, mean temperature and flow for each sampled week. The line within the box marks the median, boundaries indicate the 25^{th} and 75^{th} percentiles, error bars indicate the maximum and minimal value in $\pm 1.5 \sigma$ variations and circles indicate individual values outside this range. Gray lines mark statistically significant variations with *p*-values < 0.05, 0.01 and 0.001 for *, ** and *** respectively.

261 *3.3.2. Analgesics*

ACM and SCA were the two most abundant DTRs detected during this study. Their cumulative loads, grouped as "Analgesics", ranged from 194.7 to 887.5 g.day⁻¹. A significant decrease in the loads of Analgesics was observed between weeks 12, 13 and 14. A significant increase was then observed between weeks 15 and 16, before marked variations between weeks 19, 20 and 21 (Figure 4).



Figure 5: Loads of ACM and SCA, for each sampled week. The line within the box marks the median, boundaries indicate the 25th and 75th percentiles, error bars indicate the maximum and minimal value in \pm 1.5 σ variations and circles indicate individual values outside this range. Gray lines mark statistically significant variations with *p*-values < 0.05, 0.01 and 0.001 for *, ** and *** respectively

The Analgesic loads during the Easter holidays (weeks 14 and 15) were the lowest and are statistically significant in comparison with the previous and following weeks. Hence, the decrease in these loads can be interpreted as a significant demographic decrease in the catchment during the vacation. This decrease is also visible in the significant decrease of the flow values during weeks 14 and 15 (Figure 4). Similarly, the two highest weekly loads were found during weeks 12 and 17, 278 corresponding to the two coldest weeks of the monitoring period, even if the pattern is 279 systematically visible for each analgesic (Figure 5). However, meteorological conditions may 280 significantly impact the excretion of these compounds within the catchment, resulting from a 281 relative increase in their consumption during cold episodes (Roumie and Griffin, 2004). Lastly, the 282 pronounced disturbance in the WWI flow during the heavy rainfall events (i.e. weeks 21 and 22, 283 Figure S2) strongly impacted both ACM and SCA loads (Figure 5), with a sudden increase in week 284 21 followed by a sudden decrease in week 22. These variations are unexpected at this time of the 285 year, but major modifications in the operating conditions in the sewers due to the mix with 286 rainwaters could be the main reason for these variations.

287 *3.3.2. NSAIDs*

288 The weekly loads of NSAIDs result from the addition of DCF, IBP and KET loads. Among them, 289 KET is the most abundant DTR, representing 65% of the whole load on average. Significant 290 variations were found in NSAID loads, with higher loads during weeks 12 and 17 in comparison 291 with weeks 13 and 16 respectively, and a lower load during week 22 in comparison with weeks 21 292 and 23 (Figure 4). The latter case is comparable to that observed for Analgesics and can be related 293 to the strong rainfall events, which disturbed the operating conditions in the sewer system. 294 Concerning NSAID loads during weeks 12 and 17, it is worthwhile noting that they coincided with 295 the two coldest weeks of the monitoring period. Hence, these cold weeks appear to favor the 296 excretion of NSAIDs in the catchment, resulting in a significant increase during these weeks for 297 IBP and KET (Figure S4). The use of this type of medication as both a painkiller and for anti-298 inflammatory purposes is probably the main reason for the excretion (*i.e.* consumption) increase 299 during cold events (ter Laak et al., 2010).

300 *3.3.3. Antibiotics*

301 This cluster is composed by SUL and TMP, between which the significant correlation has already 302 been discussed (Figure 2). Whereas the analysis of individual compounds does not show any 303 statistically significant variations (except between week 17 and 18 for SUL, Figure S5), their 304 cumulative loads display a significant decrease between week 13 and 14 and a significantly higher 305 load in week 21 in comparison with weeks 20 and 22 (Figure 4). The former pattern can be 306 attributed to the beginning of the Easter holidays in week 14, as previously discussed on Analgesics. For the latter, the disturbance generated by rainfall events is yet again the only logical 307 308 explanation that we can propose.

309 *3.3.4. Others*

310 This group comprises year-long pharmaceuticals such as CBZ, MET, ATE, BZB and OXA, and 311 one illicit drug, THC, which is considered to be mainly consumed year-long. A significant variation 312 can be observed between weeks 17 and 18 (Figure 4). From a general point of view, the loads of 313 this cluster globally increase during the monitoring period, although this type of evolution is 314 unexpected based on their posology. A demographic shift due to the end of the university year 315 could be a possible explanation (Vatovec et al., 2016). However, no correction of the population 316 was performed here. Looking at the load evolution of single compounds, this global increase is not 317 common and is not statistically significant. Yet, both CBZ and THC present a pattern impacted by 318 the Easter holidays, whereas the loads of ATE, BZB and MET, like the other therapeutic classes, 319 are only affected by the strong rainfall events (Figure S6). This different impact of social and 320 meteorological events on the weekly load variations of DTRs that are presumably consumed 321 identically (i.e. all year long) raises questions about the sociological profile of such consumers. 322 However, the present study did not provide any clues to elucidate this issue.

323 *3.3.5. Opioids*

324 The weekly loads of opioids were calculated by summing the loads of COD, TRA, 6MAM, BUP, 325 METD and MOR. These compounds have several different therapeutic purposes. 6MAM is an 326 exclusive DTR of heroin consumption, whereas MOR results from both licit and illicit uses (Baker 327 et al., 2014). COD and TRA are both used for their analgesic properties and can be used (partially) 328 in association with analgesics such as ACM. Finally, METD and BUP are two substitutes for illicit 329 substances. In view of these differences, we will focus on the pattern of individual loads rather than 330 cumulative ones. TRA and BUP loads did not exhibit any significant pattern throughout the 331 monitoring period (Figure S7). MOR and COD appear to be impacted both by the Easter holidays 332 and the cold snap during week 17, as previously described for NSAIDs and Analgesics (Figure 4). 333 For COD, this pattern can be explained by its consumption in association with ACM (i.e. COD was 334 significantly correlated with ACM and SCA, Figure 1), whereas for MOR this pattern is more 335 surprising. Another surprising significant variation was observed for 6MAM, with higher loads 336 during the Easter holidays. Due to the very weak loads of 6MAM (i.e. the lowest among the analyzed DTRs, between 0.1 and 73 mg.day⁻¹), any hypothesis can only be speculative. 337

338 *3.3.6. Stimulants*

Consumption of this type of illicit drugs is considered to be related to recreational uses. Hence, the daily loads of Stimulants (i.e. the addition of BZE, COC, CET and MDMA loads) exhibit a completely different pattern from that of the other clusters (Figure 1).



Figure 6: Loads of BZE, COC, MDMA and CET, for each sampled week. The line within the box marks the median, boundaries indicate the 25^{th} and 75^{th} percentiles, error bars indicate the maximum and minimal value in $\pm 1.5 \sigma$ variations and circles indicate individual values outside this range. Gray lines mark statistically significant variations with *p*-values < 0.05, 0.01 and 0.001 for *, ** and *** respectively

348 For example, a significant increase in BZE and COC loads occurred during the Easter holidays, as

349 well as a significant increase at the end of the examination study period, especially for MDMA

350 (Figure 6).

Even if CET can be considered as a metabolite of COC, its excretion necessitates the consumption

- 352 of both ethanol and COC. As a result, the offset between these two DTRs is not surprising.
- 353 However, due to the very weak CET loads and poor weekly variations, no further conclusions can

be drawn about this DTR. In the same way, BZE is the main metabolite of COC (Figure 3), and during the first weeks of the monitoring period, the variations in these DTRs were very close. From week 18, the weekly loads of BZE decreased whereas no variation occurred in the COC weekly loads. This could suggest that although BZE and COC can both serve as DTRs to estimate the consumption of cocaine, their potential is not equivalent. The greater stability of BZE makes it more reliable for use as a DTR.

From week 18 on, a general but statistically non-significant decrease in all stimulants was observed. The use of these substances seems to be correlated with the academic calendar, and students are known to be among the consumers of such substances (van der Poel et al., 2009). This result is especially interesting and makes a new type of contribution to our understanding of the temporal dynamics of Stimulants, beyond the weekday/weekend pattern.

365 **4. Conclusion**

366 Twenty-five DTRs were monitored during 84 consecutive days to assess daily and weekly load
367 variations as a function of external forcings in the catchment.

368 Findings show that the daily variations of stimulants are very different from those of the other 369 DTRs analyzed. The impact of the pronounced increase during weekends is probably the most 370 important factor in this statistical clustering. The loads of Analgesics and NSAIDs also exhibit a 371 very significant correlation, emphasizing the presence of external factors that could lead to their 372 consumption/excretion within the catchment. Thus, both meteorological (e.g. cold snap) and social 373 (e.g. holidays) events involve sudden and significant variations. Other therapeutic classes such as 374 Opioids are less concerned by this type of temporal pattern. A good fit between the academic 375 calendar and the loads of Stimulants was found, consistent with the overrepresentation of students 376 in the consumption of recreational drugs.

This type of monitoring improves our understanding of the impact of external forcings on the consumption behavior (*i.e.* temperature, academic calendar) or mobility of people out of the catchment (*i.e.* holidays). However, a strong disturbance of the loads was observed during heavy rainfall events. The mixing between wastewaters and rainwaters considerably modified the loads of DTRs in WWI without any logical pattern. Such results suggest that while this study provides initial insights into the temporal dynamics of DTRs in WWI, further work remains necessary to deepen our comprehension of daily load variations.

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