



DO NOT REPRODUCE

**PRESCRIPTION OPIOID EPIDEMIC:
RECOGNIZE OPIOID MISUSE AND ADDICTION**



FACTS ABOUT OPIOID ADDICTION IN THE UNITED STATES:

- As of 2016, the estimated death rate due to opioid overdose in the US was 40-52 people a day.
- Prescription pain medication misuse can affect all races, ages, economic levels, and genders.
- Studies estimate that between 3-19% of people who take prescription pain medications develop an addiction to the pills. **Opioid addiction may be a biological response to misuse of properly prescribed medications.**
- Risk factors for prescription pain medication addiction include previous substance abuse, mental illness, chronic pain, and genetic predisposition.
- Some people think that abusing prescription pain medication is safer than “street drugs” because it is a medicine, but that is not true.
- Some examples of opioids are: oxycodone, hydrocodone, and fentanyl.
- 45% of people who use heroin started with an addiction to prescription opioids.

SIGNS OF ADDICTION:

- Losing motivation or productivity
- Decreased inhibitions— doing things that they typically would not do
- Appearing sedated or lethargic
- Changes in appetite and often sick with flu-like symptoms

SIGNS OF OVERDOSE:

- Overdose is a life threatening situation. People who take more opioids than are prescribed are at an increased risk for overdose and death.
- Signs of overdose include:

Slowed or no breathing | Pinpoint pupils | Unconsciousness
Seizures | Clammy skin | Fatigue | Confusion | Nervousness

**AT SIGNS OF OVERDOSE, IMMEDIATELY CALL 911
and administer Narcan if available.
Perform rescue breathing until help arrives.**

AVOIDING ADDICTION AND OVERDOSE:

- Ask your physician for pain medications that are not opioids to avoid bringing opioids into your home.
- Naloxone (or Narcan) is a medication that reverses the effects of opioids and is effective in preventing death from an overdose, as does rescue breathing.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist if Naloxone is right for you or a family member.

SAFE STORAGE AND DISPOSAL OF OPIOID MEDICINES:

- Keep medications hidden safely out of sight.
- Lock up prescription pain medications in the home. Keep a count of all pills to notice if any are missing.
- Dispose of all prescription pain medications when they are no longer needed:

— Use safe local disposal sites and information found at www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback

If you think that you or a family member is misusing prescription opioids, contact your doctor about treatment for addiction or call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations national help line to find treatment options: 1-800-662-HELP (4357). Or visit www.samhsa.gov.

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