

## QUICK FACTS

- Opioids are a type of drug used to reduce pain.
- Doctors prescribe prescription opioids to treat moderate to severe pain, but opioids also have serious risks and side effects.
- When used as directed and under a doctor's careful supervision, prescription opioids are an effective tool in pain management.
- However, when used outside of a doctor's directions, they can be very dangerous and lead to overdose.
- There are also illegal opioids that people use and abuse. Illegal opioids are very dangerous and can lead to overdose.

## WARNING SIGNS OF OPIOID USE

- In 2020, nearly 75% of the overdose deaths in the US involved an opioid and 82% of all opioid overdose deaths involved synthetic opioids.
- The number of drug overdose deaths increased by nearly 30% from 2019 to 2020.
- Deaths involving all opioids increased by 38%.
- Prescription opioid deaths increased by 17% and synthetic opioid related deaths increased by 56%.
- Opioid overdoses can happen when a person:
  - Does not understand the doctor's directions.
  - Accidentally takes an extra dose.
  - Deliberately misuses a prescription medication.
  - Takes opioid medications prescribed for someone else.
  - Mixes opioids with other medications, alcohol, or over-the-counter drugs.
  - Uses illicit drugs.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF OPIOID USE

Abuse, addiction, and overdose are the most serious risks associated with using prescription opioids. However, even when a prescription opioid is taken as directed by a doctor, there are a number of side effects that can occur.

## SIDE EFFECTS OF OPIOIDS

- Tolerance (needing more medication for the same pain relief).
- Physical dependence (having symptoms of withdrawal when the medication is stopped).
- Increased sensitivity to pain.
- Nausea, vomiting, and dry mouth.
- Sleepiness and dizziness.
- Confusion.
- Depression.
- Low levels of testosterone.
- Itching and sweating.

CEO Ingaide Company

For over 5 years, our company has been helping people in Bladen County, NC.

**RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE**

Call 910-862-6900 today to speak to someone who can help.

## SIGNS OF OVER-MEDICATION

- Unusual sleepiness or drowsiness.
- Mental confusion, slurred speech, intoxicated behavior.
- Slow or shallow breathing.
- Pinpoint pupils.
- Slow heartbeat, low blood pressure.
- Difficulty waking the person from sleep.

## SIGNS OF OVERDOSE

Overdose can result in death if not treated.

- Body is limp.
- Face is pale or clammy.
- Fingernails and lips have a blue or purple tint.
- Vomiting or making gurgling noises.
- Cannot be awakened from sleep or is unable to speak.
- Breathing is very slow or stopped.
- Heartbeat is very slow or stopped.

## TREATMENTS FOR OVERDOSE

Naloxone, also known as Narcan®, is an FDA-approved medication used to reverse opioid overdoses. It can rapidly reverse an overdose, but is not a long-lasting treatment and immediate medical attention is still required.

As of March 2023, the FDA has approved an over-the-counter version of naloxone that will make the medication available without a prescription to anyone who is concerned about the risk of an overdose in a loved one.

## WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Opioid overdoses require immediate medical attention. Recognizing an overdose can save lives.

- Call **911** immediately and follow the dispatcher's instructions.
- If the person has stopped breathing or breathing is very weak, perform CPR (CPR is best performed by someone who is properly trained).
- If naloxone (Narcan®) is available, administer it to the person who overdosed.
- Try to keep the person awake and breathing.
- Lay the person on their side to prevent choking.
- Stay with the person until emergency workers arrive.

## TAKE ACTION

If you or a loved one is exhibiting signs of misuse, overuse, or over-medication, the sooner you address the issue, the better the outcome.

- Call 911 immediately if you believe someone is having an overdose.
- Reach out to your child's school counselor, pediatrician, or a mental health professional.
- Remember that early intervention is always best for your child's health and well-being.

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