

Prescription Opioids



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Please contact us for further information.

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Everyone Makes a Mark

What are Opioids?

They are a group of drugs that can provide pain-relieving effects and they can also cause euphoria (a sense of pleasure or well-being). They are usually prescribed to people with acute or chronic pain from disease, injury, or surgery. The misuse or non-medical use of prescription opioids occurs when these drugs are used for reasons outside of pain relief - for example, to get a mellow "high".

Common Opioids

Description

Morphine (e.g., Dialudid)

Street name: Dreamer, Morpho, God's drug

Looks like: white crystals, hypodermic tablets or injectable solutions

How used: taken orally, injected or smoked

Oxycodone (e.g., Percocet)

Street name: Cotton, blue, Ox, Os, Pills

Looks like: tablets or capsules

How used: taken orally or injected

Codeine (e.g., Tylenol 2)

Street name: Sparkle, zoom, glitter

Looks like: dark liquid varying in thickness, capsules and tablets

How used: taken orally or injected

Meperidine

Street name: Pethidine, Demerol, Mepergan

Looks like: white powder

How used: inhaled or injected

Who uses opioids?

People aged of 18 and 25 reported the highest lifetime non-medical use of pain relievers at about 25%.

Non-medical prescription opioid use in Canada is 10 times lower than that of the US.

What impact do opioids have?

The major effects of prescription opioids are primarily pain-relief and euphoria, which is a sense of well-being and relaxation.

However, abuse of these drugs can lead to several negative consequences such as:

- Respiratory depression/arrest
- Nausea, vomiting
- Drowsiness, sedation
- Confusion and depression
- Constipation
- Coma and/or death

If the drug is being injected instead of inhaled or taken orally, the user is exposed to additional hazards in relation to using dirty and shared needles, such as blood-borne infections (e.g., HIV, hepatitis B and C).

Withdrawal symptoms for Opioids

Fatigue, yawning, increased anxiety, larger pupils, gooseflesh, sweating, insomnia, hypersensitivity. More severe cases: increased heart rate, abdominal cramping, diarrhea, and nausea, vomiting.

Treatment

Methadone and Buprenorphine are most commonly used drugs to treat prescription opioid addiction. They can be prescribed by a doctor in a safe manner. They have fewer withdrawal effects and long lasting, yet less intense "high". As well, suboxone is a new a different option of treatment for opioid addiction that blocks the effects of opioids and is hard to abuse.

Why Youth choose Prescription Opioids:

- Easily access to prescriptions. Most common place is household cabinets or at a relative's home, which means it is free and easy to get.
- Pressure of social life. Youth see prescription drugs used by family for medical purposes and used by peers for non-medical purposes; therefore, drugs become normalized and common.
- Believe drug is safe and acceptable as they are prescribed by doctors; therefore increase use of drugs.
- Coping mechanism.