

# Opioid Overuse

Prescription opioids can be prescribed by doctors to treat moderate to severe pain, but can have serious risks and side effects.

Common types are oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), morphine, and methadone.

In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in the acceptance and use of prescription opioids for the treatment of chronic, non-cancer pain, such as back pain or osteoarthritis, despite serious risks and the lack of evidence about their long

Heroin is an illegal, highly addictive opioid. Its use has increased across the U.S. A heroin overdose can cause slow and shallow breathing, coma, and death. Heroin is typically injected, but is also smoked and snorted.

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid pain reliever. It's many times more powerful than other opioids and is approved for treating severe pain, typically advanced cancer pain. Illegally made and distributed fentanyl has been on the rise in several states.



## Risk Factors:

- Obtaining overlapping prescriptions from multiple providers and pharmacies.
- Taking high daily dosages of prescription opioid pain relievers .
- Having a mental illness or history of alcohol or other substance abuse.
- Living in rural areas and having low in-

## Prescription Opioid Side Effects:

- **Tolerance** meaning you might need to take more of the medication for the same pain relief
- **Physical dependence** meaning you have symptoms of withdrawal when the medication is stopped
- **Increased sensitivity to pain**
- **Constipation**
- **Nausea, vomiting, and dry mouth**
- **Sleepiness and dizziness**
- **Confusion**
- **Depression**
- **Low levels of testosterone** that can result in lower sex drive, energy, and strength
- **Itching and sweating**