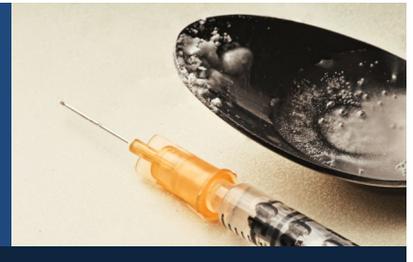


Frequently Asked Questions About Opioid Addiction



1. What should I do if I think a member of my family is using illegal drugs or abusing prescription drugs?

Review the tips below as you begin engaging the person you care about in the process of getting help. Most importantly you should educate yourself about the disease of addiction and seek support for yourself during this process.

- Learn about the signs and symptoms of substance abuse.
- Note any significant changes in an individual's physical appearance, personality, attitude or behavior. Make a list of the behaviors or physical signs that concern you.
- Talk to the individual when he/she is not under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. Set a time when you are both available to discuss your concerns. Be ready for avoidance and denial.
- Express concern over a particular incident and relate this to the substance use. Be supportive and compassionate. It is important that you are not judgmental. Recognize that a substance use disorder is a medical condition.
- If the individual needs treatment or additional help, seek professional assistance. Health care professionals are trained to assist with referrals to trained counselors who can properly assess an individual's substance use disorder.¹

For more information, visit <https://oasas.ny.gov/treatment/index.cfm>.

2. Where can I get substance abuse treatment for myself, a family member, or friend?

A list of treatment resources in Onondaga County can be found on the Onondaga County Health Department website at:

<http://www.ongov.net/health/opioids/treatment.html>

If you or someone you care about is experiencing a crisis or is interested in being referred to services, you can call the New York State HopeLine at 1-877-8-HOPENY. All calls are free, anonymous, and confidential. Professionals will assist with connecting you to a prevention or treatment professional.

3. Will I get addicted to opioids if my doctor prescribes them to me?

Anyone who takes prescription opioids can become addicted to them. You may develop a tolerance—meaning that over time you might need higher doses to relieve your pain, putting you at greater risk for a potentially fatal overdose. You can also develop physical dependence—meaning you have withdrawal symptoms when the medication is stopped. Discuss a plan to decrease the dose and frequency with the goal of ending usage of opioids. This should be done under strict supervision of a medical professional. Do not abruptly stop opioid medications as it will result in withdrawal which could be life threatening. Never take opioids in higher amounts or more often than prescribed.²

4. What are the most common opioids?

Opioids come in several forms. They are as follows:

- Pill: hydrocodone (Vicadin), oxycodone (Percocet, Oxycontin, Roxicet), Buprenorphine
- Powder: fentanyl, heroin, morphine
- Liquid: methadone, morphine, codeine
- Patch: fentanyl, buprenorphine

5. What is Naloxone and how does it work?

Naloxone is a lifesaving medication that can be used to quickly reverse an opioid overdose. It works by binding to the opioid receptors in the brain and can reverse and block the effects of opioids.³The U. S. Food and Drug Administration has approved three forms of Naloxone:

- Nasal spray
- Auto injectable
- Injectable (requires professional training)

6. Where can I get Naloxone?

Naloxone is currently available without a prescription at more than 2,000 pharmacies throughout New York State. To find a pharmacy near you that provides Naloxone without a prescription, follow this link:

https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/opioid_overdose_prevention/docs/pharmacy_directory.pdf

The New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute implemented the Naloxone Co-payment Assistance Program (N- CAP) on August 9, 2017. For individuals with prescription coverage through their health insurance plans, this program will cover the cost of co-payments for naloxone up to \$40 **so there are no or lower out-of-pocket expenses** when accessing naloxone at participating pharmacies.

7. Where can I be trained in the use of Naloxone?

The following agencies provide Naloxone training to members of the public in Onondaga County:

ACR Health

627 West Genesee Street Syracuse, NY 13204

Phone: 315-475-2430

Website: <http://acrhealth.org/exchange/training>

Syracuse Behavioral Health

329 North Salina Street, Suite 101 Syracuse, NY 13203

Website: <http://www.sbh.org/sbh-public-training/>

8. How can I get rid of any unwanted prescription or over-the-counter medications?

The SNADD (Sharps, Needles, and Drug Disposal) program is Onondaga County's solution for safe disposal of household medications, including both over-the-counter and prescription medications. Drop off locations can be found at:

<http://upstate.edu/poison/pdf/snadd-poster.pdf>

Additionally, there are National Drug Take-Back Days in both October and April each year. More information can be found by going to:

https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/

9. What alternatives are there for pain management other than prescription opioids?

Discuss with your doctor pain treatment options, including ones that do not involve prescription drugs.

10. What are the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for opioid prescribing?

The CDC has developed opioid prescribing guidelines for primary care providers to improve pain management and patient safety. There are 12 main recommendations, but the three most important (if appropriate) are:

- Non-opioid treatment should be considered for chronic pain.
- The lowest possible effective dosage should be prescribed to reduce risks of opioid use disorder and overdose.
- Physicians should always exercise caution when prescribing opioids and monitor all patients closely.⁴

Learn more about the guidelines by following this link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/prescribing/guideline.html>



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¹ Adapted from: New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS). *The Power of Communicating: Empowering Individuals to Act*. <https://oasas.ny.gov/CombatAddiction/documents/SomeoneIknowisAbusingFlyer8.16.2016.pdf>. Accessed 9/18/2017.

² Adapted from: National Institute of Health: National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Opioid Overdose Reversal with Naloxone (Narcan, Evzio)*: <https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/opioid-overdose-reversal-naloxone-narcan-evzio>. Accessed 9/15/2017.

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Opioid Overdose: Frequently Asked Questions. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/patients/faq.html>. Accessed 09/21/2017.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain: Frequently Asked Questions. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/prescribing/guideline.html>. Accessed 9/17/2017