

REDUCE THE NEED

- Talk to your health care provider about pain management and whether your medication has a high risk for abuse.
- Ask about alternatives to painkillers, such as acupuncture, relaxation, or over-the-counter pain relievers
- Only fill a prescription if you think you will need it, or fill half and return for the rest later, if needed.
- If you are taking opioid medication long-term, ask your doctor about Naloxone nasal spray. Naloxone can reverse opioid related unconsciousness due to accidental overdose. Inform friends and family on direction for use, and location of Naloxone.

For more information

Call:

Substance Use Treatment

Services *Prevention*

(408) 794-0660



SANTA CLARA COUNTY
Behavioral Health Services

THE HIDDEN EPIDEMIC



Over the course of a given year, approximately 100 million people in the United States suffer from pain. Some 9 to 12 million of them have chronic, consistent pain while the remainder have short-term pain from injuries, illnesses, or medical procedures. All of them should benefit from skillful and appropriate pain management, which may include the judicious use of opioid medicines in conjunction with other methods of treatment or in circumstances in which non-addictive therapies are insufficient to control pain.

New England Journal of Medicine

The United States population constitutes less than 5% of the world's people but we use 80% of the world's opioids. Persons aged 65 and older comprise only 13% of the population, yet account for 1/3 of the total outpatient spending on prescription medications. *NIDA 2016*



What are Opioids?

Narcotic painkillers producing euphoric-like effect in users. They are most often used medically to relieve pain but also by people addicted to opioids. In 2015 the Center for Disease Control reported 52,404 deaths due largely to opioid overdose.

Opioid Examples

Codeine, Hydrocodone (Vicodin), Hydromorphone (Dilaudid), Demerol, Methadone, Morphine, Oxycodone, Propoxyphene

Life Changes for Older Adults

- Children are grown and on their own
- It becomes necessary to give up a job, move to a smaller home, or even return to work unexpectedly
- Friends grow fewer and farther apart
- Lifestyle changes
- Health declines



WARNING SIGNS OF MEDICATION MISUSE

- Taking a medication in a manner or dose other than prescribed
- Sharing prescription medications
- Increasing the dosage against medical advice to seek greater pain relief
- The intention for use is different than prescribed...(i.e. weight loss, sleep aid, or to get the pleasant euphoric feeling)

Commonly Prescribed Medications

Medical Uses

Medications

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Chronic or acute pain | → Vicodin, Dilaudid, Demerol, Oxycotin, Darvon, Percodan |
| Anxiety & panic disorder | → Xanax, Librium, Diazepam, Lorazepam |
| Insomnia, anxiety, seizures | → Fiorinal, Miltown, Nembutal, Seconal, Phenobarbital |
| ADD and ADHD, narcolepsy, weight loss | → Adderall, Dexedrine, Ritalin, Meridia |

Safe use – what can you do?

- Take as **directed** (not increasing dosage) and ask pharmacist questions and concerns
- Keep a **list of all your medications**
- **Secure** all medications in a safe and secure (remote) spot of your house and even consider a medication lock box
- **Count** and know how many pills come in your prescription and be able to account for all pills
- **Dispose** Don't flush. Take unused medications to local pharmacy or disposal station. For more information, visit dontrushtoflush.org