



COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA  
**Behavioral Health Services**

**OPIOID TOOLKIT: KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE**  
**FEBRUARY 2021**

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# Introduction to Opioids

# WHAT ARE OPIOIDS?

Opioids are a category of narcotic substances that are derived from the opium poppy plant or are synthetically made. One of the most commonly used and illegal opioid is heroin. Synthetic opioids include fentanyl and prescription pain relievers such as OxyContin, codeine, morphine, Percocet, and Vicodin. These prescribed opioid medications can be helpful when used correctly under the guidance of a healthcare provider, but misuse can lead to dependence and addiction.

Slang Terms: *Oxy, Percs, Vike, Lean, Biscuit, Monkey, Buse, Apache, Smack, Tootsie roll*



# MISCONCEPTIONS

Myth	Truth
The use of pain medication will always lead to addiction.	In most cases, when taken according to prescription instructions, pain medication is safe. It is important to discuss the prescription thoroughly with a doctor.
There is an “addiction” gene that controls who does and does not become addicted.	Genetic factors might make some people more sensitive to the effects of a drug. However, many factors (inherited and environmental) determine the likelihood that someone may become addicted to a drug.
Heroin is the opioid that kills the most people.	Prescription drug overdoses outnumber deaths by heroin and cocaine combined. This does not in any way lessen the danger of heroin—or other illegal drugs—but it does put into perspective the problems with prescription drug misuse.
Only certain people misuse or abuse drugs.	Drugs affect people from all races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic classes. Drugs do not discriminate or stereotype.
Once a person is addicted to drugs, there is no hope for recovery.	Addiction is not a hopeless problem. Help is available, and treatment can work

# THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC



- ❖ Prescription opioids are found in millions of households across the country. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 128 people in the United States die every day from an opioid overdose.
- ❖ According to the CA Department of Public Health (CDPH), California experienced 3,244 opioid-related overdose deaths in 2019. The annual crude mortality rate for 2019 was 8.21 per 100k residents. This represents a 48% increase from 2017.
- ❖ CDPH reports that Santa Clara County experienced 88 opioid-related overdose deaths in 2019. The annual crude mortality rate for 2019 was 4.5 per 100k residents. This represents a 30% increase from 2017.
- ❖ Opioid overdoses have been growing worse during the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 40 states have seen rising deaths from opioids, including fentanyl.

# HARMS AND RISKS OF OPIOID MISUSE

It is important to understand the effects opioids can have on the body and brain:

- ❖ A single dose of an opioid can slow the body's heart and breathing rate to the point of stopping completely
- ❖ Opioids affect both the spinal cord and brain to reduce the intensity of pain-signal perceptions as well as brain areas that control emotion. They can also affect the brain to cause euphoria
- ❖ Taking opioids with alcohol or sedatives increases the risk of all side-effects
- ❖ Under the influence, the ability to drive or operate machinery may be impaired
- ❖ Pregnant women using opioids may put their child at risk



# HARMS AND RISKS OF OPIOID MISUSE

## Risks and Side-effects:

- *Mind and mood Changes*
- *Sleep disorders*
- *Drowsiness*
- *Seizures*
- *Dry mouth & Tooth decay*
- *Low sex hormones*
- *Severe respiratory depression*
- *Hyperalgesia (increases sensitivity to pain)*
- *Constipation and bowel dysfunction*
- *Coma/Unconsciousness*
- *Permanent brain damage*
- *Physical dependence and tolerance*
- *Addiction*
- *Accidental overdose or death*



# FENTANYL TAKES FRIENDS

## FENTANYL WARNING

The deadly synthetic opioid *Fentanyl* has been found cut into party drugs. It's an ugly surprise.

PEOPLE ARE OVERDOSING AND DYING.

FriendTaker.org

## WHAT IS FENTANYL?

Fentanyl is a powerful opioid, like heroin, but 50 - 100 times stronger. It is a prescription pain killer used to treat severe pain. It can be injected, snorted, smoked, taken orally by pill, or spiked onto blotter paper. Many times, fentanyl is mixed into other drugs such as cocaine or meth without the user's knowledge.

## WHY IS FENTANYL A BIG DEAL?

In 2019, there were 71,000 drug overdose deaths in the US, most of which were from fentanyl or other synthetic opioids. Drug overdoses are now the leading cause of injury-related deaths - almost twice as many as people die from drug overdoses than are killed in car accidents.

## FENTANYL ADDICTION

Fentanyl, like all opiates, is extremely addictive. Even taking prescription fentanyl as instructed by a doctor can quickly lead to dependence and addiction. Fentanyl addiction can be treated through a combination of [medication and behavioral therapies](#). There are many treatment programs available, especially now that we are experiencing an opioid epidemic

## FOR MORE INFORMATION...

- Visit [Fentanyl Takes Friends](#) Media Campaign Website
- Visit [Santa Clara County Opioid Overdose Prevention Project \(SCCOOPP\)](#) Website

# ADDICTION

- ❖ Opioids produce short-term positive feelings by mimicking the body's natural endorphins. With continued use, people quickly develop tolerance to opioids.
- ❖ When they stop using, they may experience withdrawal symptoms such as anxiety, sweating, and flu-like symptoms. When this happens, people tend to focus on relieving and preventing withdrawal.
- ❖ Even though heroin is highly addictive, more people struggle with addiction to prescription pain pills. Many young people who end up injecting heroin got started with prescription opioids.
- ❖ Babies exposed to opioids during pregnancy can be born with neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome (NOWS)

# TREATMENT

## Adult Substance Use Treatment Services

Gateway Call Center: 1(800) 488-9919

Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

## Youth Substance Use Treatment Services

(408) 272-6518

Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

After hours: 1-800-488-9919

## Naloxone (Narcan) Kit for Opioid Overdose

<https://www.sccgov.org/sites/bhd/info/opioid/Pages/RescueTraining.aspx>

[Click here for the Santa Clara County Needle Exchange Program](#)

[Click here to search for Treatment service centers in California](#)

[Click here to learn more about Medication Assisted Treatment](#)

# Online Resources

# ONLINE RESOURCES FOR THE COMMUNITY

## **Schools:**

[DEA Operation Prevention Program Flyer](#)

[DEA- Operation Prevention- Opioid and Prescription Drugs curriculum- Free; elementary- high school; in person curriculum and self-paced digital modules.](#)

[SAMHSA- What Educators Can Do to Help Prevent Underage Drinking and Other Drugs- fact sheet](#)

[NIDA-teacher materials- Mind Matters Opioids](#) 5-8 grade materials

## **Information for Teens:**

[NIDA- Opioid Facts for Teens- Booklet](#)

[SAMHSA- Tips for Teens- The Truth About Heroin](#)

[SAMHSA- Tips for Teens-The Truth About Opioids](#)

[DEA- Prescription Drug Misuse- rack card](#)

[DEA-Heroin-rack card](#)

[DEA- Fentanyl Fact Sheet](#)

[PrimoPrevention- fentanyl- rack card](#)

# ONLINE RESOURCES FOR THE COMMUNITY

## Information for Parents:

[DEA- Operation Prevention Parent Toolkit](#)

[SAMHSA- Talking with Your Teen About Opioids- Brochure](#)

[Partnership for Drug Free Kids- Heroin Fentanyl Other Opioids eBook](#)

[NIDA- Opioid Facts for Parents-Booklet](#)

[Drugfree.org-Preventing Teen Abuse of Prescription Drugs- Fact Sheet](#)

## Resources in Spanish:

[NIDA- Opioid Facts for Parents Booklet- Spanish](#)

[NIDA- Opioid Facts for Teens Booklet- Spanish](#)

[SAMHSA- Tips for Teens the Truth About Heroin- Spanish](#)

[SAMHSA- Tips for Teens the Truth About Opioids- Spanish](#)

# Supplemental Information

# RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

While anyone who uses a prescription opioid can become addicted, several risk factors are associated with higher rates of misuse and addiction. Other factors are protective and linked with a decreased risk of Opioid abuse.

## Risk Factors

- Current substance use
- Mental illness
- Younger age
- Early initiation of substance use
- Peer substance use
- Accessibility to opioids
- Unsanctioned use of prescription drugs

## Protective Factors

- Healthy beliefs
- Emotional, behavioral, cognitive, and moral competence
- Opportunities for positive social involvement
- Family bonding
- Environmental strategies (e.g., prescription drug monitoring programs, drug disposal programs)
- Community education on misuse

# EVIDENCE-BASED PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGIES TO REDUCE OPIOID MISUSE

- **Leadership** - Community leaders and agencies establishes a shared vision for comprehensively addressing opioid use disorder.
- **Partnership & Collaboration** – Promote multisector work needed to comprehensively address opioid use disorder. Clear objectives, defined tactics, and an understanding of cultures and business practices of (health care) partner groups are critical for successful community collaborations.
- **Education & Prevention** - Builds individual and community resilience. Includes implementing evidence-based campaigns to promote awareness and engaging communities to address addiction.
- **Epidemiology & Surveillance** - Improve prevention, treatment, and recovery response by using real-time public health data for decision making and to inform the development and implementation of programs and policies.
- **Treatment & Recovery** - Public health and social service programs to promote evidence-based, comprehensive, and accessible services for substance use treatment and recovery support.
- **Harm Reduction & Overdose Prevention** - Provide opportunities to intervene and refer individuals to treatment

# WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

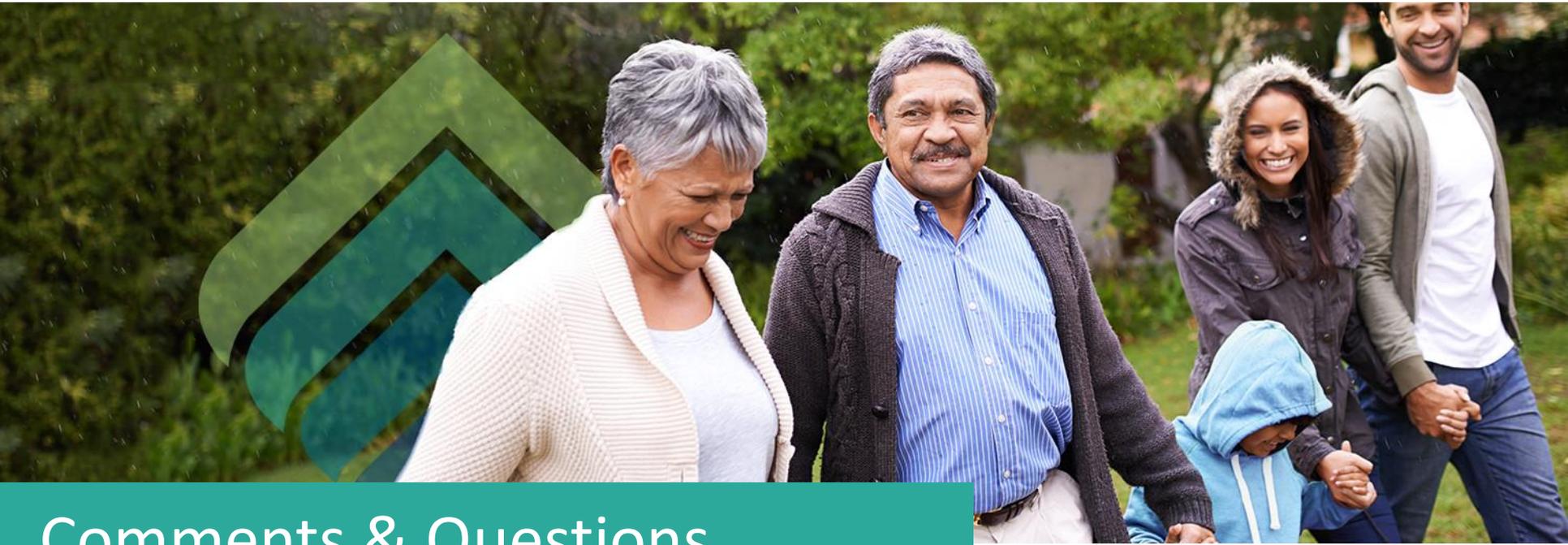
- **Know the signs.** Although each case is different, there are common signs of potential opioid misuse and abuse in children and teenagers. These include: Negative changes in grades, skipping school, dropping longtime friends, loss of interest in usual activities, changes in appearance, and changes in general behavior, including sleeping and eating habits.
- **Talk to your kids.** Tell your children about how dangerous opioid drugs can be, and why it's important to use them only--and exactly--as prescribed. Children who learn about the risks of drugs at home are less likely to use drugs than those who don't learn this at home.
- **Store medicines safely.** Keep opioids and other prescription medicine in a secure place. Count and monitor the number of pills you have and lock them up. Do not allow your child or teen unsupervised access to these medications. Never let your child take someone else's prescription medication.
- **Consider the alternatives.** Many people believe opioids work best for pain, but recent studies show that non-opioid medicines such as ibuprofen and naproxen, as well as non-medical approaches can be just as effective.

# WHAT PARENTS CAN DO

- **Ask for help.** If you think you or your child may be using opioids nonmedically, or developing addiction, don't hesitate to seek help. Opioid use disorder is a chronic, treatable condition that can be managed successfully with medication and recovery support services. Your child's pediatrician can explain treatment and resources available for young adult patients or provide referrals to other providers who can help. Similar treatment is available for pregnant individuals with opioid addiction
- **Know what to do in an overdose emergency.** Ask your pediatrician about [naloxone](#), which can prevent opioid overdose deaths. Learn the signs of a possible overdose, such as, difficulty and shallow breathing, severe sleepiness, and not being able to wake up. Always call 911 if you believe someone is experiencing an overdose, even if you give them Naloxone.
- **Dispose leftover prescription medication.** Return leftover prescriptions to a hospital, doctor's office, or pharmacy. Many communities offer ["take-back" events](#) to collect unused prescription medications.

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# Comments & Questions