

UPSOAR

WHAT ARE OPIOIDS?

Opioids are a type of drug that are made from opium found in poppy plants. Prescribed opioid drugs are very powerful and are commonly known as “pain killers” or narcotics. Use of opioids can be from your own prescription, someone else’s prescription (“borrowing”, buying, or stealing), or use of heroin, an illegal opioid drug.



Natural
opium



Prescribed
“Pain Killers” and Narcotics
oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), morphine, fentanyl, tramadol, etc.



Illegal
heroin

CAN I DEVELOP SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (ADDICTION) IF I TAKE OPIOID DRUGS THAT MY DOCTOR PRESCRIBES TO ME?

Yes! Opioid drugs are very powerful and anyone who takes them can become addicted. **Misuse or abuse** of these drugs increases the chance that you might develop substance use disorder. Additionally, there are many **risk factors** that also increase this chance. It is important to remember that no one is immune to addiction.

MISUSE

- Taking a dose at the wrong time
- Forgetting a dose
- Stopping medication too soon
- Taking medication from a friend
- Taking medication other than what it is prescribed for

ABUSE

- Using without a prescription
- Taking to get “high”
- Exceeding recommended dose
- Chronic or repeated abuse
- Developing tolerance

Misuse and abuse behaviors may initially seem harmless and are often developed gradually. This can make recognizing these behaviors difficult. **The main difference between misuse and abuse is the individual’s intention in taking the drug.**



Psychological

Co-occurring mental disorders
Difficulty controlling emotions/impulses



Biological

Family History
Gender
Changes to brain



Social

Peer pressure
Lack of social support
Traumatic past or family experiences
Social acceptance
Significant life changes

RISK FACTORS

Keep in mind that you can have none of these risk factors and still develop substance use disorder. Likewise, you can have many of these risk factors and not develop the disease. It is important to pay attention to signs of misuse and abuse as well as physical and behavioral warning signs.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I OR A LOVED ONE HAVE SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER?

Substance Use Disorder should be diagnosed by a doctor or mental health professional. However, there are several **signs and symptoms** of substance use disorder that are important to be aware of. Additionally, recognizing signs of **tolerance and dependence** can also help you know if you or a loved one might be developing substance use disorder.

Physical and Behavioral Warning Signs

Every person can display different signs and symptoms. It is important to remember that these signs and symptoms do not appear overnight. The person will usually display small signs that will get worse over time. Friends and family members often don't recognize signs and symptoms because of this slow progression.



Bloodshot or glazed eyes



Dilated or constricted pupils



Abrupt weight changes



Changes in hygiene



Dental issues



Skin changes



Sleep problems



Increased aggression or irritability



Changes in attitude/personality



Lethargy



Depression



Sudden changes in social network



Dramatic changes in habits/priorities



Involvement in criminal activity



TOLERANCE

Tolerance occurs when more of a substance is needed to feel the same affect.



DEPENDENCE

Dependence occurs when your body and brain rely on a substance. Without this substance, you feel like you can not function properly.



SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDER

Substance Use Disorder, also known as addiction, occurs when your body and brain rely on a substance to the point that it takes over as the #1 thing you feel like you need to survive-- above food, family, sleep, employment, etc.

EVEN IF I DON'T KNOW ANYONE WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER, IS THERE STILL SOME WAY THAT I CAN HELP?

Yes! One of the most needed ways that people can help is to work to **change the negative social stigma** associated with substance use disorder. For people affected by substance use disorder, this can make it even harder for them to seek treatment and support. An easy way to start to change the negative stigma associated with substance use disorder is to use more neutral, less stigmatized, words when talking about the disease and the people affected by it.

What images and ideas come to mind when someone says, "That person is an addict."?
 How do those ideas compare when someone says, "That person has substance use disorder."?
How we talk influences how we think and even how we treat others.

STIGMATIZING LANGUAGE	PREFERRED LANGUAGE
✗ Addict	✓ Person with substance use disorder
✗ Addicted to (substance)	✓ Has a (substance) use disorder
✗ Addiction	✓ Substance use disorder
✗ Clean	✓ In recovery
✗ Clean screen	✓ Substance free