



Safe Prescribing Initiative

HANLEY FOUNDATION



Keep Your Family Safe

What You Need to Know About Prescription Opioids

What is an Opioid?

Opioids are a class of drugs used to reduce pain. According to the CDC, prescription opioids can be prescribed by doctors to treat moderate to severe pain but can also have serious risks and side effects. Therefore, prescription opioids should be prescribed when the benefits outweigh the risks. The most common types are oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), morphine, and methadone. Treatments should also include non-medicinal options such as physical therapy.

Possible Side Effects

Prescription opioids carry severe addiction and overdose risks, especially with prolonged use. An opioid overdose, often marked by slowed breathing, can cause sudden death. The use of prescription opioids can have several side effects as well, even when taken as directed:



Tolerance

meaning you might need to take more of a medication for the same pain relief



Depression



Constipation



Physical Dependence

meaning you have symptoms of withdrawal when a medication is stopped



Low Levels of Testosterone

can result in Lower Energy and Strength



Nausea, Vomiting, & Dry Mouth



Confusion



Increased Sensitivity to Pain



Itching & Sweating



Sleepiness & Dizziness



94%

of adolescents will divert prescription opioids when approached

Visit HanleyFoundation.org/spi/ to learn more.

Is Your Child at Risk?



History of Drug Misuse, Substance Use Disorder, or Overdose



Mental Health Conditions
(such as depression or anxiety)



Environmental Issues
(availability of alcohol and prescription medications at home or in the community)

*Visit HanleyFoundation.org/spi to learn about the risks of opioid misuse and overdose.



About **75% of 18 to 30-year-olds** admitted to treatment programs for substance use disorder **began using substances at the age of 17 or younger.**

Children and Adolescents are Especially at Risk

- Most people with substance use disorder start using substances during adolescence.
- Using alcohol or drugs during adolescence or young adulthood affects brain development which is not complete until about a person's mid-twenties.

Talk to Your Child's Healthcare Provider

If your child is prescribed any of the medications below in conjunction with opioid:

- **Benzodiazepines** (such as Xanax or Valium)
- **Muscle Relaxants** (such as Soma or Flexeril)
- **Hypnotics** (such as Ambien or Lunesta)
- **Other Prescription Opioids**



BE INFORMED!

Make sure you know the name of your child's medication, how much and how often to take it, and its potential risks & side effects.

Know Your Options

Some of these options may work better and have fewer risks and side effects. Options may include:



Pain Relievers
such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and naproxen



Other Medications That Are Not Habit Forming



Physical Therapy and Exercise



Mental or Behavioral Health Therapies

Checklist to Go Over with Your Children

- Never take opioids in more significant amounts or more often than prescribed.
- Follow up with your primary health care provider within ___ (fill in the number of days recommended by your provider) days.
- Work together to create a plan on how to manage your pain.
- Talk about ways to help manage your pain that doesn't involve prescription opioids.
- Talk about any concerns and side effects.
- Help prevent misuse and abuse.
- Never sell or share prescription opioids.
- Never use another person's prescription opioids.
- Store prescription opioids in a secure place and out of reach of others (this may include visitors, friends, and family).
- Safely dispose of unused prescription opioids: Visit HanleyFoundation.org/spi for the Palm Beach County drug take-back program or your pharmacy mail-back program.

Visit HanleyFoundation.org/spi to learn more.