

## National Prevention Week May 15-21

### Prevention of Prescription & Opioid Misuse

*Millions of Americans take opioid drugs routinely for pain relief. While effective painkillers, they can also be dangerous and addictive. Learn more about your prescription and how you can stay safe.*

#### Opioids/Opiates

Opioids/Opiates work by blocking your brain's sensation of pain. They can also affect the pleasure center of your brain, causing a sense of euphoria. When taken as directed, opioids can be very effective in relieving pain. However, the body soon begins to develop a tolerance for the medication, so the same dose of medication offers less pain relief. If you feel the need to take more of the drug than was prescribed to you - Talk to your doctor!

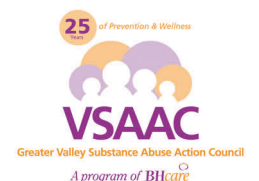
Opioids include: Vicodin, Percocet, OxyContin, Oxycodone, Methadone, Morphine, Opana, Dilaudid, and Fentanyl among others.

#### Addiction Warning Signs

- Taking opioid medications for the feeling of pleasure/euphoria or for emotional escape
- People suggest you cut back or quit using the medications
- Taking the medications other than orally- such as crushing and snorting, or injecting
- Having cravings when not taking the drugs
- Seeking early refills of prescriptions, prescriptions from other doctors, or drugs from other sources

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The Connecticut Prevention Network (CPN) is an association of the state's 13 community partnership Regional Action Councils (RACs) that work to provide your community with education, training and advocacy for substance abuse prevention and mental health promotion



Over the past several years, opioid overdoses have increased significantly in Connecticut. Opioids include heroin and prescription drugs such as oxycodone (OxyContin), fentanyl, hydrocodone, codeine, and methadone. However, opioid medication is not the only medication, people abuse. The CT Prevention Network has outlined some parent tips on prescription medication:

- Educate yourself to learn as much as you can about the dangers of prescription drugs.
- Talk to your child about not using medication not prescribed to them and lock medication that is prescribed to them.
- Ensure your home is safe from prescription drug abuse. Lock up your drugs so your kids and their friends don't have access to them.
- Drop off unused and expired drugs at a drop box location <http://www.ct.gov/dcp/cwp/view.asp?q=501922>
- Watch for the warning signs (see reverse side)
- Know the warning signs of an overdose.
- Get to know your child's friends and their parents and be on the alert for those who allow underage drinking and the use of other substances in their homes.
- Be wary of sleepovers at your house or another parent's home. Prescription drugs are easy to hide and can easily be used in these settings.
- Share the information you've learned about prescription drugs with your children, starting early and talking often.
- Stay closely connected with your college students. If living away from home, visit them frequently and get to know their friends and living environment. Don't stop talking with them about the dangers of using drugs recreationally.
- Don't hesitate to drug test your child if you think there's any chance they may be using prescription or illegal drugs.
- Don't be naive to think your child won't get involved with prescription drugs. It happens in the best of families to the best of kids.
- Look up any medication you have not seen before <http://www.drugs.com/imprints.php>

There are many types of abused medications and symptoms associated with prescription drug abuse, especially if they are taken in combination. Below are the major symptoms to be aware of.

<b>Pain reliever abuse</b> (Vicodin, OxyContin, Percocet, Lorcet, Lortab, Actiq, Darvon, codeine, morphine, methadone)	Constricted pupils Nausea and vomiting Respiratory depression (inadequate ventilation)
<b>Stimulant abuse</b> (Adderall, Dexedrine, Ritalin, Concerta)	Anxiety Delusions Flushed skin
<b>Depressant / Sedative abuse</b> (Sedatives (Valium, Xanax, Ativan, Klonopin, Restoril, Ambien, Lunesta, Mebaral, Nembutal, Soma)	Slurred speech Dizziness Respiratory depression

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