

Student Book

Let's Talk About **Opioids**



Supported by Wisconsin Department of Health Services Minority Health Program



A division of Wisconsin Literacy, Inc.

Prescription opioids

Prescription opioids:

- work in the brain to block pain
- are easy to get addicted to
- may give you a "high"
- need a prescription



Generic Names

Brand Names

Hydrocodone	→	Vicodin [®] , Lortab [®] , Lorcet [®]
Tramadol	→	Ultram [®]
Oxycodone	→	OxyContin [®] , Percodan [®] , Percocet [®]
Morphine	→	Kadian [®] , Avinza [®] , MS Contin [®]
Fentanyl	→	Duragesic [®]
Codeine		
Methadone		

Other pain medicines:

- work in different parts of the brain and body to stop pain
- are not usually addictive
- some don't need a prescription

Generic Names

Brand Names

Acetaminophen	→	Tylenol [®]
Ibuprofen	→	Advil [®] , Motrin [®]
Naproxen	→	Aleve, Naprosyn [®]
Pregabalin	→	Lyrica [®] *
Duloxetine	→	Cymbalta [®] *
Gabapentin	→	Neurontin [®] *
Meloxicam	→	Mobic [®] *

*need a prescription

Ways to take opioids

1. Pill



2. Needle



3. Drink



4. Patch



Tolerance, Dependence, and Addiction:

If you take opioids long enough, you will develop:

1. **tolerance** - you need more and more opioids to help your pain or get high.
2. physical **dependence** - your body becomes used to opioids. If you suddenly stop, you can have **nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and severe stomach pains**. You need to take less and less opioids before stopping.

You can also:

- stop breathing and **die**.
- become **addicted**.
- have **financial, emotional, family, and other problems** because you can't stop.

Don't take opioids with other drugs

Alcohol

- You can **stop breathing and die** if you drink alcohol and take opioids in the same day.
- Some **cough medicines** have alcohol in them.

Benzodiazepines ("Benzos")

- Benzos treat anxiety.
- Some examples: alprazolam (Xanax®), lorazepam (Ativan®), diazepam (Valium®), clonazepam (Klonopin®).
- You can **stop breathing and die** if you take Benzos and opioids together.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)

- Some opioid medicines have acetaminophen in them.
- Your **liver can stop working and you can die** if you take too much acetaminophen.

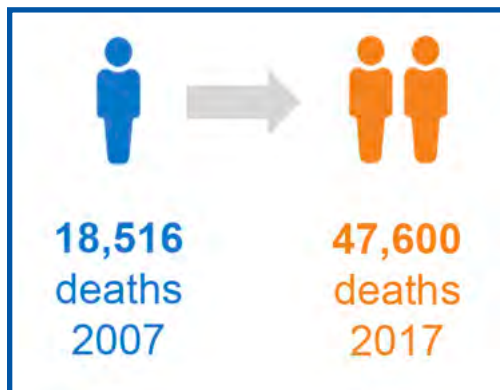
Other medicines

- Prescription medicine from a doctor
- Over-the-counter medicine
- Herbals, plants and other home remedies



Your increased risk of death from opioids

Over **130 people die every day** in the United States from opioid overdose.



Overdose deaths have more than doubled from 2007 to 2017.

**Graph adapted from Kaiser Family Foundation, "Medicaid's Role in Addressing the Opioid Epidemic 2019"*

You are **129 times** more likely to die from a drug overdose in the first 2 weeks after you are released from prison.

Why?

- Your tolerance decreases in prison, so you can overdose more easily.
- Fentanyl and other stronger opioids are common in street drugs now.
- You have trauma from being in prison, so you are more likely to self-medicate.

Synthetic opioids

A synthetic opioid is not a natural opioid (not made from a poppy plant). Examples are fentanyl and carfentanil.

Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid. It is...

- more dangerous than heroin if you inject into your blood.
- 50-100 times stronger than morphine.
- sometimes a patch you put on your skin.

Carfentanil is another synthetic opioid found in heroin and other drugs. It is...

- about 10,000 times stronger than morphine.
- about 100 times stronger than fentanyl.
- made for large animals (like an elephant) and not for people.



These are the amounts of each drug that can kill you.

You don't know what's in a drug you buy on the street

Look at the pictures.



Any of these drugs can be mixed (laced) with fentanyl.

- Most heroin in the United States is mixed with fentanyl.
- Fentanyl is also mixed in cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana, and other drugs.

Fentanyl is dangerous because it's **impossible** to mix evenly with other drugs.

Think of it this way: Imagine mixing 5 grains of salt with a bag of flour. You can't split a grain of salt, so you will not be able to mix the salt and flour evenly. When you take flour out of the bag, one handful might have 3 grains of salt while another handful has no salt.

Trauma increases your risk for self medication

- You may have had past trauma.
- Trauma is the emotional response to a terrible or overwhelming experience.
For example:
 - abuse, neglect, sexual assault, or rape
 - violence
 - an accident, natural disaster, or war
 - unexpected loss
 - poverty
 - loss of a parent (death or divorce)
 - chronic illness
 - incarceration

Trauma can...

- limit your ability to cope with stress.
- cause depression and anxiety.
- cause physical pain.
- cause other unwanted feelings or thoughts.

Some people use drugs and alcohol to cope or numb their feelings after trauma. Opioids are commonly used because they numb physical and emotional pain.



People who have 5 or more trauma experiences as a kid are 7 to 10 times more at risk for self-medicating compared to people who have no trauma as a kid.

Keep others safe

Keep opioids away from children and pets.

- Children can die if they accidentally swallow opioids they find at home.
- Most kids who use heroin started using opioid medicine found at home.

Make sure other people cannot get your opioids.

- Never leave opioids on counter tops, tables, nightstands, in your bathroom, or medicine cabinet.
- Lock opioids in a lock box or put them in a high place, out of the reach of kids.



Do not use opioids when you are with children.

Get rid of your unused opioids

Get rid of your unused opioids as soon as you stop using them. This will stop kids and other adults from taking them.

Find a Wisconsin disposal site near you: www.doseofrealitywi.gov/drug-takeback/find-a-take-back-location

Where can you get rid of unused opioid medicine in your community?

Signs of opioid overdose

- Sleepy and unresponsive... OR awake, but unable to talk
- Nodding off
- Blue lips
- Slow or shallow breathing
- Choking sounds or vomiting
- Skin pale or clammy (cold and sweaty)
- Slow or no pulse
- Pinpoint pupils



Naloxone: A drug that can stop an overdose

- Have naloxone. It can **save your life** if you overdose and stop breathing.
- Tell friends and family if you have naloxone on you.
- Naloxone comes as a spray for the nose and as an injection. It is also called: Narcan®, Evzio® or Narcan® Nasal Spray.
- If someone overdoses, **inject naloxone in the upper leg or upper arm**. You can inject it through clothing.
- At some pharmacies, you can get naloxone without a prescription. Look for a pharmacy near you:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/opioids/naloxone-pharmacies.htm

Give naloxone AND call 911.

The Good Samaritan Law protects you if you help someone you believe is injured or dying. **Do not drive a person who has overdosed to the hospital.**

Prevent an overdose

Don't use opioids - that's the best way to prevent an overdose.

- Find recovery services in your area.
 - Call 211 or 833-944-4673.
 - Text your ZIP code to 898211.
 - Manage anxiety, depression, and trauma with a health professional to reduce your risk of self-medicating.
- Ask about medication to treat opioid addiction.
 - Naltrexone
 - Vivitrol
 - Suboxone
 - Methadone

You are **most at risk** of an overdose during the **first 2 weeks** after you leave prison.

If you might take opioids, lower your risk of dying.

- Don't take opioids when you are alone.
- Have naloxone with you.
 - Tell the people you're with that you have it.
- Check your drugs for fentanyl.
 - Call 211 to ask where you can get fentanyl test strips.
 - Test every individual amount of drug you will take.

**Call 211 if you or someone you know needs help
with opioid recovery or treatment.**



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