

# Opioids: What you need to know

Opioid dependence and addiction is at an all-time high. Every day, many people die from an opioid overdose.

Have you been using an opioid medication and are experiencing some of the signs of substance use disorder that are listed in this flyer? Have you asked a doctor for more prescription opioids even though you don't need them anymore? If so, you may be dependent or addicted.

The Substance Use Disorder Helpline's specially trained recovery advocates can give you information about opioid use. They can also arrange a professional evaluation. They can help you find medication assisted treatment (MAT) options from a provider in your network.

## Are you at risk?

Admitting substance use disorder takes courage. Read these statements to see if you may be at risk:

- ▶ Do I keep my use a secret from others?
- ▶ Are friends, family, or co-workers concerned?
- ▶ Do I find any excuse to drink or use?
- ▶ Do I use to change the way I'm feeling?
- ▶ Is my use increasing?
- ▶ Do I make promises to stop or cut back, but never follow through?
- ▶ Do I tell myself my problem isn't that bad?
- ▶ Have I ever had a blackout (memory lapse) after using?
- ▶ Do I feel regret or shame after using?
- ▶ Do I spend more money than I can afford on alcohol or drugs?
- ▶ Am I at risk of physical danger or financial loss?
- ▶ Do I look forward to using alcohol or drugs?

If you have answered yes to three or more of these questions, you may be at risk for substance use disorder.<sup>1</sup>

## About medication-assisted treatment (MAT)

Most people are able to take prescription opioids for pain without serious problems. But some struggle to use their medication correctly. This can lead to a substance use disorder (SUD). SUD is a brain disease. It causes people to seek a "high" from the medications, no matter what the consequences. Sometimes



**The Optum Substance Use Disorder Helpline,  
at 1-855-780-5955.**

This confidential service is provided at no added cost to you. Your personal information will be kept confidential in accordance with state and federal laws.

Call the number above or visit:  
[liveandworkwell.com/recovery](https://liveandworkwell.com/recovery)

people who can't get their prescription medication anymore turn to cheaper opioids like heroin. Heroin addiction affects more than half a million people.<sup>2</sup>

Medications, including buprenorphine, methadone, and extended release naltrexone, are effective for the treatment of opioid use disorders.<sup>3</sup> MAT uses medications that control withdrawal symptoms and cravings that can lead to relapse. Some people may need to stay on these medications for a long time. This gives them time to recover and reduces the dangers of relapse. When medication is combined with counseling and other support, it is very effective. It helps people recover and resume a productive life.

**For education, guidance and referral, for you or your loved one call the confidential Substance Use Disorder Helpline at 1-855-780-5955.**

Helpline recovery advocates understand what you're going through.

1. Mayo Clinic. Drug addiction: Risk factors. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/drug-addiction/symptoms-causes/syc-20365112> Updated: Oct 26th, 2017. Accessed: Oct 11th, 2019.

2. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2016). Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (HHS Publication No. SMA 16-4984, NSDUH Series H-51). [samhsa.gov/data/](http://samhsa.gov/data/).

3. National Institute on Drug Abuse; National Institutes of Health; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Accessed 10.24.2019 Cite.



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