

LEARN ABOUT

OPIOID USE DISORDER PREVENTION



This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider

What Is Opioid Use Disorder?

- Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) is a medical condition that can develop when repeated use of opioids leads to difficulty controlling their use
- Opioids include prescription pain medications such as oxycodone, morphine, and fentanyl, as well as illegal drugs like heroin
- A person with OUD may continue using opioids even when they cause physical or mental health problems, strain relationships, interfere with work or school, or make daily life more difficult
- OUD can change how the brain works, making it difficult to stop without proper treatment and support

Prevention Strategies and Lifestyle Tips

- Safely storing and properly disposing of medications
- Talking openly with family and children about the risks of opioids
- Exploring non-opioid pain management options, like stretching or walking
- Participating in physical therapy when recommended
- Practicing relaxation techniques, like deep breathing or quiet time
- Using over-the-counter medications, like ibuprofen or acetaminophen (Tylenol), as directed
- Building healthy stress management skills, like journaling, playing sports, making music, or seeking counseling

Things That May Increase Risk

- Using drugs or alcohol in the past
- Struggling with depression, anxiety, or trauma
- Feeling alone or not having supportive relationships
- Easy access to unused or unlocked opioid pills
- Ongoing pain without safe and complete treatment

Things That Help Lower Risk

- Strong support from family, friends, or community
- Healthy coping skills, such as exercise, art, prayer, or journaling
- Doctors using safe prescribing practices
- Learning early about the risks of opioids and safe pain alternatives