

## Opiates & Addiction

Heroin and prescription painkillers (with brand names like Vicodin, Percocet, and Oxycontin) are both opiates. They affect the brain and body in very similar ways. Either one can lead to addiction and overdose.



There is evidence that, as prescription painkillers become less freely available, heroin use is increasing. Not everyone who uses prescription painkillers will move on to heroin—but many people will.

In Pennsylvania and around the country, opiate addiction affects men and women of all ages, races, and geographic locations. Anyone can become addicted. Anyone.

There are research-based approaches to preventing and treating opiate use.

Visit **PAStop.org** for information you can use.

Commonwealth Prevention Alliance  
**Stop Opiate Abuse Campaign**

## What is PAStop.org?

Funded through a generous grant from the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), The Commonwealth Prevention Alliance (CPA) has developed these resources for anyone looking for help. PA Stop is designed to educate Pennsylvanians about the risks of prescription painkiller and heroin use, the relationship between painkiller and heroin use, and what to do when you need help.

We are working to prevent non-medical use of prescription painkillers and, in so doing, to break the connection between heroin and prescription painkillers. Together, we can stop opiate addiction before it starts.



**Anyone Can Become Addicted.**

**Anyone.**

Stop Prescription Drug Abuse Before It Starts.



**Learn More. PAStop.org**

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Sponsored by the Commonwealth Prevention Alliance through funding made available by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD)

**The United States is in the midst of an epidemic of opiate addiction and overdose.**

**Pennsylvania's overdose rate is higher than the national average.**



## **The Problem:** Did You Know?

Overdose kills more people in Pennsylvania than car accidents.

Seven Pennsylvanians die every day of a drug overdose.

75% of young people who misuse prescription painkillers get them from friends and family, not doctors.

About 3 out of 4 new heroin users report having abused painkillers prior to using heroin.

Although the national rate of overdose from prescription painkillers has flattened out in recent years, the rate of heroin overdose has tripled in the last five years.

## **Prevention:** Did You Know?

There is strong evidence that involved and supportive parenting can reduce the likelihood that a young person will use drugs.

Research clearly shows that early onset of substance use leads to more problems later in life.

Some people are at higher risk of addiction than others. A family history of addiction, a mental health condition, an impulsive/risk-taking personality, and/or a history of trauma are considered to be risk factors.

## **Finding Help:** Did You Know?

Treatment quality varies. There are questions you can ask that help you find good treatment for yourself or a loved one.

Detox and treatment are different. Detox is the medical management of withdrawal symptoms. Treatment addresses the biological, psychological and social aspects of treatment. Detox with no follow-up is not treatment.

There are three main types of medications that have been shown to help people recover from opiate addiction; methadone, buprenorphine (Suboxone is a popular brand name), and injectable naltrexone (Vivitrol is a popular brand name.) All of which must be medically supervised by health care professionals.



Counseling can provide encouragement and motivation to stick to treatment. It can teach coping skills and how to prevent relapse. And, it can help people learn how to make healthy decisions, handle setbacks and stress, and move forward with their lives.