

Prescription Pain Medicines and Illegal Drugs (Opioids)



What are **Opioids**?

Opioids are pain medicines prescribed to reduce the pain signals reaching the brain and the brain areas that control emotion.

They include:

- Hydrocodone
- Oxycodone
- OxyContin
- Codeine
- Fentanyl
- Morphine

Illegal forms of opioids include heroin.

How do **opioids** affect you?

These drugs reduce how you perceive pain. When you use drugs as ordered by your provider, they help you after injury, surgery or illness. When you use drugs without a medical reason, they can cause harmful effects.

Talk to your provider about your drug use. You can get the help you need.

Do you have health questions?

Call our 24-hour Nurse Advice Line. We are here to help you.

English: **(888) 275-8750** Español: **(866) 648-3537** TTY/TDD: **711**

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What are the **harmful effects**?

- Weak breathing
- Constipation (hard to have a bowel movement)
- Blocked pain signals
- Mental confusion
- Nausea
- Organ damage

What are the **signs of dependence**?

- You need more of the drug to control pain.
- If you reduce or stop using the drug, you have withdrawal symptoms.

What are the **signs of abuse**?

- Using the medicine with other drugs your provider did not order
- Snorting or injecting the drug
- Too many refill requests

Only one large dose of an opioid can cause severe breathing problems or death.

