

Recognizing the Signs of Opioid Abuse & Misuse

Prescription opioids are used to treat moderate-to-severe pain and are prescribed following surgery or injury or for health conditions to manage chronic pain.

Opioids can be misused, resulting in a person becoming addicted. Signs of addiction are physical dependence and high tolerance to opioids resulting in a person wanting more opioids, more frequently. Once addicted, severe withdrawal can often result if someone tries to quit.

A major warning sign of addiction is if a person keeps using opioids even though taking them has begun to impact their daily lives. Consequences of addiction can include, trouble keeping a job, relationship turmoil, or run-ins with law enforcement.

Other signs/consequences can include:

- Trying, but being unable, to stop or cut down on opioid use.
- Using opioids or other drugs because of being angry or upset with other people.
- Taking one drug to get over the effects of another.
- Making mistakes at school or on the job because of using opioids or other drugs.
- Drug use hurting relationships with family and friends.
- Being scared at the thought of running out of opioids or other drugs.
- Stealing to pay for opioids or other drugs.
- Being arrested or hospitalized for opioids or other drug use.
- Developing a tolerance, and needing larger amounts of drugs to get the same effect.
- Overdosing.





How to Help & Resources



How you can help:

- Reach out if you think you or someone you know has a possible opioid addiction.
- Talk to family members, friends, drug help lines, or a health care professional.
- If a loved one has a problem, be supportive and try to get them help.
- Recognize that a substance use disorder is a medical condition.
- Show support to people in recovery:
 - Acknowledge and celebrate their recovery achievements.
 - Encourage them to communicate and maintain their recovery program.



A person addicted to prescribed opioids can turn to illicit heroin or fentanyl. This has led to an increased number of drug overdoses and deaths across Arizona and the United States.

Resources for treatment:

Southwest Behavioral & Health Services Bullhead City, AZ

- 928-763-7111
- www.sbhservices.org/opiate-treatment
- Service available in Mohave County.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

- 1-800-662-4957
- www.samhsa.gov
- Will connect you to services in Arizona.

Community Bridges - Payson, AZ

- 877-931-9142
- communitybridgesaz.org
- Service available in Gila County.

Arizona Department of Health Services

- 1-888-688-4222
- www.azdhs.gov/oarline/
- Will connect you to services in Arizona.