



FIGHTING THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

In the U.S.,

OPIOIDS killed more than **33,000** people in 2015, more than any year on record.

Opioids are drugs that are used to reduce pain, including prescription painkillers and heroin. Examples of opioids include:

- Vicodin
- OxyContin
- Percocet
- Morphine
- Codeine

SERIOUS RISKS & SIDE EFFECTS OF OPIOID USE:

- Tolerance
- Physical dependency
- Increased sensitivity to pain
- Depression
- Sleepiness & dizziness
- Itching & sweating
- Nausea, vomiting & dry mouth
- Constipation



Anyone who starts taking prescription opioids can become addicted to them. Once addicted, it can be extremely hard to stop.



Louisiana is one of eight states that has **more opioid prescriptions than it has residents**. The state has the **sixth highest prescription-per-capita rate** at 1.03 pain-killer prescriptions written per Louisiana resident in 2015.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- Take medicine only if it has been prescribed to you by your doctor.
- Do not take more medicine or take it more often or longer than instructed.
- Call a doctor if your pain gets worse.
- Never mix pain medicines with alcohol, sleeping pills, or any illicit substance.
- Store your medicine in a safe place where children, others not in need of it or pets cannot reach it.
- Learn the signs of overdose and how to use naloxone to keep it from becoming fatal.
- Teach your family and friends how to respond to an overdose.
- Discard unused medication properly. For information on how to properly discard medication, visit www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/BuyingUsingMedicineSafely.

Help is available for a substance use disorder. For more information about our services, visit cahsd.org or realhelpbr.com or call **(225) 925-1906**.



FIGHTING THE OPIOID ABUSE EPIDEMIC



THE NUMBER OF OPIOID DEATHS IN LOUISIANA INCREASED BY 12.4% FROM 2014-2015

OPIOID OVERDOSE DEATHS FOR AGES 18-21:

2014

777



2015

861



ON AN AVERAGE DAY IN THE U.S.



MORE THAN 650,000 prescription opioids dispensed

3,900 people initiate nonmedical use of prescription opioids



91

people die from an opioid-related overdose

BE INFORMED: KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

Talk to your health care provider about ways to manage your pain without the use of prescription opioids. Some of these options may actually work better and have fewer risks and side effects.

Options may include:

- Pain relievers such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and naproxen
- Some medications that are also used for depression or seizures
- Physical therapy and exercise
- Cognitive behavioral therapy that is a goal-directed approach, allowing patients to learn how to modify physical, behavioral, and emotional triggers of pain and stress

WHAT CAN I DO?

An opioid overdose, often marked by slowed breaths, can cause death. Call 911 immediately if you suspect an overdose. The Good Samaritan Law protects people from arrest and prosecution for minor drug law violations when calling EMS for opioid overdose cases. Also, **Naloxone**, a medication that blocks or reverses the effects of opioids, is now available through local pharmacies without a prescription.

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