

STAND OUT

THROW IT OUT.

OPIOIDS

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If you've ever broken a bone or had surgery like getting your wisdom teeth out, your doctor may have given you a small prescription for an opioid. Opioids are a class of drug deriving from an opium poppy plant, and chemicals within the drug often help relieve moderate to severe pain. They can also be used at times to treat coughing or digestive issues. Some common opioid prescriptions include hydrocodone (Vicodin®) oxycodone (OxyContin®, Percocet®), oxymorphone (Opana®), morphine (Kadian®, Avinza®), codeine, and fentanyl.

Opioids are known to sometimes make consumers feel very relaxed, or "high," which is one of the primary reasons they are misused. The drug can be dangerously addictive. Overdoses and death as a result of opioid abuse are far too common. Heroin is a type of opioid, one of the world's most dangerous kinds, and it is never used as medicine in the United States.

The misuse of opioids happens when consumers take the medicine in a way other than they have been instructed by their doctor, as well as when someone uses a drug that was not prescribed to them by a doctor. Anyone taking opioids for the effect of getting "high" is abusing the drug, regardless of whether they have a prescription.

Fentanyl is a particularly concerning and highly lethal synthetic opioid. Synthetic opioids, including fentanyl, are now the most common drugs involved in drug overdose deaths in the United States. Traditionally used to treat severe pain following surgery, fentanyl is often produced illegally and mixed with other drugs as a dangerous additive. Just two milligrams of fentanyl can prove deadly; in the case of a fentanyl overdose, the medicine Naxolone can treat them if given right away.

