



2022-23 Opioid Use Prevention Toolkit


Empowerment Through Education


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💔 The United States is facing a crisis in drug misuse and addiction. Drug overdose deaths are a continuing public health burden involving every demographic - in the 12-month period ending in January 2022, the US reported 103,572 drug overdose deaths.¹

💔 In Florida, 7,983 drug overdose deaths occurred in the same timeframe.¹ These are the highest number of overdose deaths ever recorded in 12-months.

 Drug overdose deaths increased nearly 30% between 2019 to 2020.³

 Opioids attributed to 75% of the 91,799 drug overdose deaths in 2020.²

 Synthetic opioids, to which over 56,000 deaths in the United States are attributed in 2020, have resulted in more fatalities than any other opioid type.³

Between 1999-2020 drug overdose deaths involving opioids accounted for over 564,000 deaths - this includes prescription and illicit (illegally made) opioids.²

First Wave: Began in the 1990s with overdose deaths involving prescription opioids.²

Second Wave: Began in 2010 with overdose deaths rapidly increasing due to heroin.²

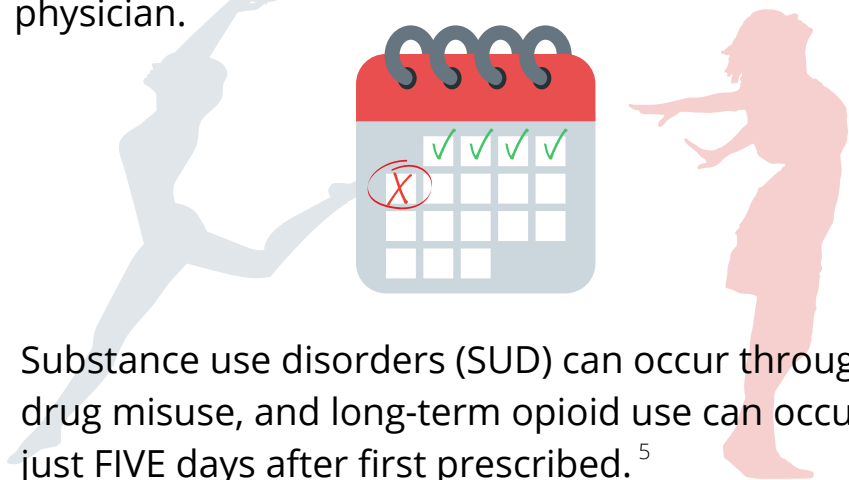
Third Wave: Began in 2013 with the increase in illicitly manufactured synthetic opioids, including fentanyl.²

**IN 2020, THE
OVERALL NATIONAL
OPIOID DISPENSING
RATE HAD FALLEN
TO ITS LOWEST
POINT IN 15 YEARS.**⁴



Dispensing rates remain high in some areas - 3.6% of counties in the U.S. had enough opioid prescriptions in 2020 for every person in that county to have one.⁴

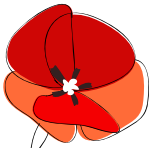
Prescription medications can provide favorable treatment outcomes when used as directed by your physician.



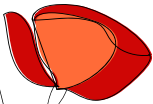
Substance use disorders (SUD) can occur through drug misuse, and long-term opioid use can occur just FIVE days after first prescribed.⁵

Opiates vs. Opioids: What is the difference? 7

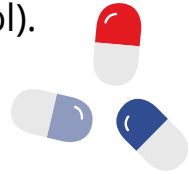
Both drug names are often used interchangeably, but the differences are slight.



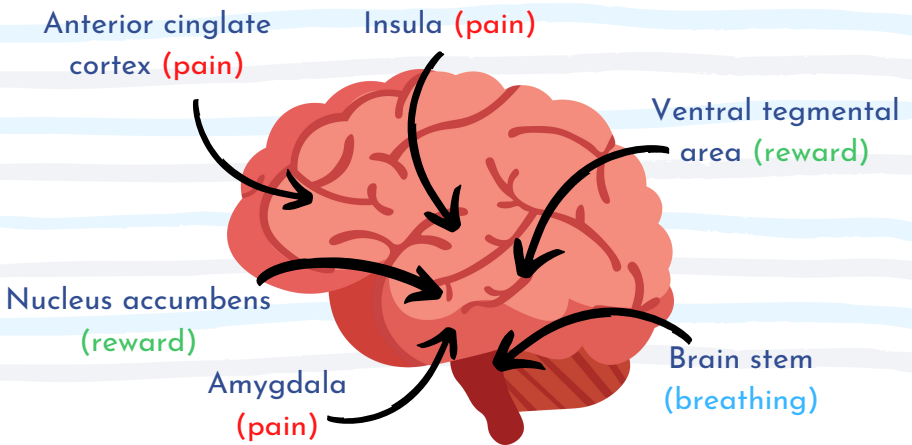
Opiates are naturally derived from the poppy plant (opium), and include heroin, morphine & codeine.



Opioids include all opiates as well as synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, methadone, and meperidine (Demerol).



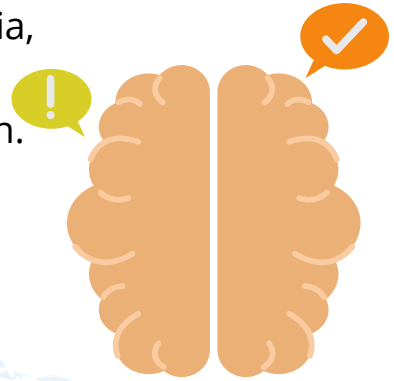
After use, opioids travel through the bloodstream to the brain, and attach to specialized opioid receptors triggering feelings of reward, relaxation & extreme happiness within the mesolimbic reward system. This can lead to addiction.



What are the Signs of Opioid Misuse?

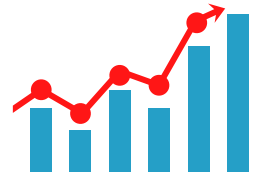
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Opioid misuse can cause hypoxia, a condition where too little oxygen is able to reach the brain. This can cause potential neurological and psychological damage including irreversible brain damage, coma, and even death.⁶



Other symptoms include small, constricted pupils, cold, pale or blue skin, loss of consciousness, shallow breathing, choking sounds and a limp body.⁷

Tolerance: Occurs when the same dose of the drug produces diminishing effects or a steadily larger dose is needed to produce the same effect.



Dependence: When a person discontinues the use of a drug the body may experience withdrawal symptoms; a group of physical and psychological symptoms ranging from mild to life-threatening.

Addiction: Unlike tolerance and dependence, addiction is a disease that manifests from using drug(s) to the point that the person simply can not stop regardless of negative consequences.

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid nearly **50-100 times** more potent than morphine and is used to treat severe pain primarily after surgical procedures.⁸

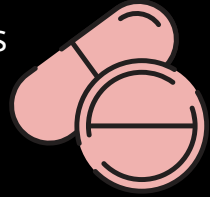


Illegal fentanyl can be sold as a powder, dropped on blotter paper like small candies, in eye droppers or nasal sprays, or made into pills that look like real prescription opioids.⁹

The Dangers of Fentanyl

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Often, illicit fentanyl or fentanyl analogs are sold on the street in a form resembling OxyContin or Xanax.¹⁰



*Carfentanil is a fentanyl-related substance that is **10,000** times more potent than morphine, **100** times more potent than fentanyl.*



It can only take 2 to 3 milligrams of fentanyl (same size as 5 to 7 grains of table salt) to induce respiratory depression or arrest, and even death.^{11, 12}

The Dangers of Fentanyl

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What does a lethal dose of fentanyl look like?¹²



A lethal dose of heroin (left), carfentanyl (middle) and fentanyl (right).¹²



Fentanyl and other synthetic opioids are the most common drugs involved in overdose deaths. Fentanyl is being mixed with other drugs, such as cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and MDMA (*Ecstasy*) which is especially dangerous since people are often unaware that fentanyl has been added.¹¹



Fentanyl has been used as a cutting agent in many illicit drugs because it is cheaper for the drug dealer regardless of the deadly risks to the buyer.

SMALL, CONSTRICTED "PINPOINT" PUPILS

SLOW, SHALLOW BREATHING

CHOKING OR GURGLING SOUNDS

FALLING ASLEEP OR LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

PALE, BLUE, OR COLD SKIN

LIMP BODY

CALL 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY

ADMINISTER NALOXONE (IF AVAILABLE)

KEEP THE PERSON AWAKE AND BREATHING

**LAY THE PERSON ON THEIR SIDE TO PREVENT
CHOKING**

**STAY WITH THE INDIVIDUAL UNTIL EMERGENCY
MEDICAL STAFF ARRIVE**

Opioid misuse can happen to any person regardless of their income, age, race, ethnicity, gender identity or sexual preference.

By advocating for change, you may identify a number of areas where you and other advocates can help address the opioid epidemic at the local, state and national levels. We each have a unique role to play and can make a difference.



See how you can get involved through federal, state and local non-profit organizations.

Dispose of Medications Properly.

Medication take-back centers are publicly available throughout Pinellas County for safe disposal of unwanted, expired, or unused medications.



These services are FREE to use!

Learn more about Operation Medicine Cabinet & the DEA National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on the community resources page or by scanning the QR code:



Stigma is a broad term describing the negative and stereotypical attitudes, feelings, and thoughts on an individual or group of people based on their traits (inherited or otherwise) such as skin color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or mental illness. Attitudes are often supported by ignorance, prejudice, and discrimination.

Stigma can lead to many negative outcomes for individuals experiencing substance use. Help may be available to individuals with SUDs, however, they may feel unworthy to accept it because of the constant pressures of stigma.

Help end stigma by visiting:



Terms like "addict, junkie, druggie" are demeaning and dehumanizing. Using first names can foster human connection, and if first names are unknown you can simply refer to someone as "friend."

Change stigmatizing terminology to inclusive terminology.

Interactions should come from a place of care - not blame.

Break the silence and advocate for change.

Normalize medication assisted therapies.

Changing your language does not mean you are changing your belief system.



A naloxone distribution program puts the antidote directly into the hands of those most likely to witness an overdose and respond first: substance users, their families, outreach workers, and even the police.



Many states allow third party access to naloxone.

This means that a family member or a friend of someone with a substance use disorder can possess it in case of emergency.

For more information on naloxone and opioid education including educational resources and treatment, please visit **www.ISaveFL.com**, or scan the QR code:



Despite their age, youth may already be aware of the names for illicit substances which are often replaced with slang terms. These terms may go unnoticed to the family or friends of someone with drug-seeking behavior.



Emoticons (emoji's) are used widely to access illicit substances. Social media platforms are used to target youth in the drug trade. Be aware, be vigilant, and talk to your kids about peer pressure.

The **Pinellas County Opioid Task Force** is a collaboration of community partners responding to the sharp increase in opioid-related drug abuse and deaths in the county.

The purpose of the task force is to develop a strategic plan that efficiently guides community members and resources in order to confront the opioid epidemic. The issue is an urgent matter as more than one person died every 14 hours in 2021 from a opioid-related overdose in Pinellas County.¹³

Participants recruited for the task force are individuals from key organizations and the community that have a vested interest in the reduction of opioid misuse in the county. This includes, but is certainly not limited to, community stakeholders, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations, law enforcement and elected officials within Pinellas County.

Scan the QR code provided to learn more about the PCOTF:



Our partners continue to grow with us!



Pinellas County Opioid Task Force



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
www.cdc.gov

DEA Office of Diversion Control Registration Call Center:
[1-800-882-9539](tel:1-800-882-9539)

Drug Free America Foundation: www.dfaf.org

ISaveFL (Find Naloxone): www.ISaveFL.com

**Narcotics Overdose Prevention and Educations (NOPE)
Task Force:** www.nopepinellas.org

National Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator:
<https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

National Treatment Referral Helpline:
[1-800-662-HELP \(4357\)](tel:1-800-662-HELP) or [1-800-487-4889 \(TDD\)](tel:1-800-487-4889)

Operation Medicine Cabinet:

www.pcsoweb.com/operation-medicine-cabinet

**Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County
(Resource Guide):**

<https://pinellas.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/wellness-programs/substance-use-prevention/resources/index.html>

Pinellas Wellness Connection (YouGood?):

<https://pinellaswellnessconnection.org/>

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
Administration (SAMHSA):**

www.samhsa.gov

**White House Office of National Drug Control Policy
(ONDCP):** www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp

The use of local and social media is an important resource when raising awareness about your campaign or advocacy group.

Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, and YouTube make up some of the most identifiable and commonly accessed platforms.



Make sure your prevention campaign materials are easy to read, are understandable to your targeted audience, and are based on current *peer reviewed* research.

- 1 - National Center for Health Statistics. 2022. Provisional Drug Overdose Death Counts.
<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>
- 2 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022. Understanding the Opioid Overdose Epidemic.
<https://www.cdc.gov/opioids/basics/epidemic.html>
- 3 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022. Synthetic Opioid Overdose Data.
<https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/deaths/synthetic/index.html>
- 4 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022. U.S. Opioid Dispensing Rate Maps.
<https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/rxrate-maps/index.html>
- 5 - Shah A, Hayes CJ, Martin BC. Characteristics of Initial Prescription Episodes and Likelihood of Long-Term Opioid Use; United States, 2006–2015. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2017; 66:265–269. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6610a1>
- 6 - National Institute of Drug Abuse, 2022. The Neurobiology of Drug Addiction.
<https://nida.nih.gov/sites/default/files/1922-the-neurobiology-of-drug-addiction.pdf>
- 7 - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022. How to Respond to an Opioid Overdose.
<https://www.hhs.gov/opioids/treatment/overdose-response/index.html>
- 8 - National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2021. Fentanyl.
<https://www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/fentanyl>
- 9 - National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2022. Fentanyl Drug Facts.
<https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugfacts/fentanyl>
- 10 - U.S. Department of Justice, DEA. A Briefing Guide for First Responders.
<https://www.nvfc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Fentanyl-Briefing-Guide-for-First-Responders.pdf>
- 11 - United States Drug Enforcement Administration, 2021. Facts about Fentanyl.
<https://www.dea.gov/resources/facts-about-fentanyl>
- 12 - Pictures courtesy of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, 2022.
<https://www.dea.gov/galleries/drug-images/fentanyl>
- 13 - District Six Medical Examiner's Office. (2022, June 9) Drug-related Overdose Death [conference presentation]; Pinellas FUSION Meeting, Pinellas County, FL, United States 2021; Pinellas County

THANK YOU

Our fight against the opioid epidemic involves the continuing commitment from all of our community partners. THANK YOU for reading this toolkit, and please share this information to spread awareness about how we can fight the opioid epidemic together.



thank you



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