

OPIOID FACT CHECK

What is an Opioid?

A type of medicine that is used to decrease feelings of pain: *(Includes prescribed medications and illegal street drugs)*

- codeine, morphine (MS Contin™)
- hydrocodone (Norco™, Lortab™, Vicodin™)
- oxycodone (Percocet™, Oxycontin™)
- oxymorphone
- hydromorphone (Dilaudid™)
- heroin, fentanyl, carfentanil (China White, black tar, brown sugar, dope, smack, horse, TNT)



What do teens think about prescription drugs?

- 1 in 5 teens report abusing prescription medications to get high
- 2 in 5 teens believe that prescription medications are “much safer” than illegal drugs
- 31% of teens believe there’s “nothing wrong” with using prescription medications without a prescription “once in a while”
- Nearly 3 in 10 teens believe prescription pain relievers are not addictive

Why is this relevant to ice hockey players?

- A study of 21,000 high school seniors across 16 sports found that ice hockey players had substantially greater odds of heroin use and non-medical use of prescription opioids in the past year.

In 2018, there were an estimated 69,000 overdose deaths in the United States. For every overdose death, there are an estimated 30 non-fatal overdoses.

Does an individual have to take pills for a long time to become addicted?

- No. 1 in 12 individuals who have not recently used opioids, but receive more than a 4-day prescription, will continue to use at one year. That could mean that if each player on a typical roster was prescribed four days of opioids at some point during the season, two players may still be using a year later.

ACTION PLAN

- After consulting your physician, treat pain first with over-the-counter pain medications (acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol™), ibuprofen (e.g., Motrin™, Advil™), or naproxen (Aleve™)).
- In acute extremity injuries, there is no clinically important difference in pain relief when given ibuprofen and acetaminophen together compared to common opioids (hydrocodone, oxycodone).
- Unbearable pain is not okay, but it is important to take the least amount of opioids possible. If opioids are needed for severe pain, take the lowest dose for the fewest days, after consulting with your physician.
- Individuals who are struggling with mental health disorders are at higher risk for substance abuse. Recognizing these players and getting them professional treatment may help prevent future problems.
- Seek help from your doctor if concerned about yourself or a friend or call 1-800-662-HELP (4357). Resources are available at: drugabuse.gov/children-and-teens