

What Are Opioids and Opiates?



Opioids

- Synthetic (not natural) drugs used to reduce pain.
- Work as pain relievers by flooding the brain with the chemical dopamine which regulates emotion and feelings of pleasure.

Opiates

- Drugs derived from opium, a natural property of poppy flower seeds
- Work as pain relievers by flooding the brain with the chemical dopamine which regulates emotion and feelings of pleasure.

Examples of prescription medications:

- oxycodone (OxyContin)
- hydrocodone (Vicodin)
- morphine
- Methadone



Ways to prevent an Opioid Overdose:

- Learn how to recognize signs and symptoms of overdose.
- Dispose of any medications that are not being used.
- Make sure medication is locked away safely.
- Never share medication.

Opioid Use Precautions

- Opioids can help you relax, feel, happy, or even sleepy. But opioids do have some harmful effects that include confusion, drowsiness, constipation, euphoria, nausea, and slowed breathing.
- The elder population is more at risk for an accidental overdose due to multiple medications being prescribed and used on a day to day basis.