

KNOW THE FACTS: PRESCRIPTION PILLS

Opioids are a class of drugs used to reduce pain.

Prescription opioids are prescribed by doctors to treat moderate to severe pain. Examples include oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), morphine, and methadone. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid, used to treat severe pain, and is usually more powerful. Heroin is an illegal opioid.

Prescription drug misuse is when medication is taken without a prescription, taking someone else's prescription, in a way other than prescribed, or for the feelings it causes (to get high). In a 2014 survey, 15 million people aged 12 or older misused a medication, on purpose or by accident. Prescription drug misuse can have serious medical consequences like addiction and unintentional overdose.

70% of people who abuse prescription medications get them through friends or family. Never share your opioid pain medicine, always lock up your prescription medications, and safely dispose of unused or expired medications at a Drug Take Back site. The Franklin Police Department collects medications 24/7.



Young people often think that prescription drugs are safer than street drugs. 4 out of 10 teens think that prescription drugs are less addictive than street drugs. Have conversations with your child about drugs. Do not give your child money if you are unsure of how it will be spent.

Before accepting a prescription for opioid medication, ask your doctor these questions:

- ☐ Why do I need this medication? Is it right for me?
- ☐ How long should I take this medication?
- ☐ Are there non-opioid alternatives that could help with pain relief while I recover?
- ☐ Is this the lowest possible dose?
- ☐ May I have fewer pills?
- ☐ How should I taper off the medication?
- ☐ How can I reduce the risk of potential side effects?
- ☐ Could this treatment interact with my other medicine?
- ☐ What if I have a history of addiction with tobacco, alcohol or another drug?
- ☐ What if there is a history of addiction in my family?
- ☐ How should I store my opioid medication to prevent other people from taking it?
- ☐ What should I do with unused opioid medicine?
- ☐ Should I have naloxone (Narcan®) available?

For more information about opioids, visit www.cdc.gov or www.dhs.wisconsin.gov.

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