

Opioids are an incredibly addictive, dangerous family of drugs that includes many painkillers such as Morphine, Vicodin, Codeine, Oxycontin, and heroin. Use of opioids has increased greatly in our region over the past 10 years. Working together to educate our neighbors, prevent initial use, and treat those in need, we can reverse the damage opioids have inflicted on our communities.

### Why the sudden rise in opioid use?

The marketing and overprescribing of opiate-based painkillers has caused a dramatic increase in opioid addiction. Prevention efforts have decreased the availability of these prescription drugs and heroin has become a cheap and easy replacement. An estimated 80% of current heroin users started with painkillers prescribed to them or someone they know. According to the Cincinnati Police Department, the street value of an 80 mg Oxycontin tablet can range from \$65 - \$80, versus a street dose of heroin that can cost \$10 - \$20. Opioid use has been found equally among men and women, across all age ranges and backgrounds, in all neighborhoods in Southwest Ohio.

### What is heroin?

Heroin is a white/brown powder or a black, sticky "tar" that can be injected, smoked, or snorted. These three methods of ingestion deliver the potent drug quickly to the brain, contributing to the significant health risk with even just one dose. Continued use changes the brain's chemical structure and causes addiction, or uncontrollable desire to use despite negative consequences. It can also be known as "smack," "junk," "H," "black tar," "ska," and "horse."

### What makes heroin different from other drugs?

#### Extreme Tolerance

Individuals using heroin quickly build a high tolerance to the drug, which results in the need to use more to achieve a high. This high tolerance diminishes quickly, however, when a person stops using. If that person then returns to using, at the same level as before, that dose may be lethal.

#### Severe Withdrawal

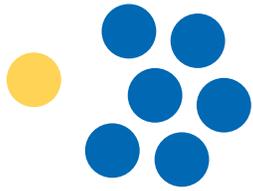
Continuous use of heroin causes the body to become physically addicted. Once addicted, reducing or stopping use causes the person to become nauseous, sweaty, and have extreme physical pain. Using again causes those symptoms to stop. The initial use that started with feeling high becomes use to keep from feeling awful. The tremendous need of the user to stop the symptoms of withdrawal can lead to them taking a higher dose which may cause overdose.

#### Other Dangers

It is often found that other toxic substances and contaminants are added to heroin to increase the effects and make it more potent. These added substances can increase the risk of overdose. There is no safe dose of an unregulated substance.

### Signs and Symptoms

Someone under the influence of opioids may appear high, be nauseous, itchy, sleepy, nodding off, or have slowed breathing. Signs of an overdose include bluish lips and fingertips, clammy skin, small pupils, slowed or stopped breathing, and general non-responsiveness.



# Prevention & Treatment

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## OPIOIDS AND HEROIN

### What if you suspect an overdose?

If someone appears to be overdosing, call 911 immediately and indicate you suspect heroin involvement. A medication called Naloxone (Narcan®) is available that can reverse a heroin overdose. Work is being done to expand the availability of Narcan® beyond first responders.

### Prevention Efforts

One of the most basic and effective prevention measures is being involved. Have conversations with your children, friends and neighbors. Be active with local workgroups, law enforcement, schools and churches – anywhere that people can be reached for education and assistance if they have a problem. In addition, individuals need to be cautious if prescribed prescription painkillers so to not exceed doctor's recommendations and dispose of unused pills properly.

### Treatment Works!

Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT) has proven to be an effective part of a comprehensive addiction treatment plan. Medications can help control the intense cravings and physical withdrawal associated with heroin addiction. MAT combined with traditional cognitive behavioral therapy has been shown to assist those addicted into recovery. Talbert House uses Suboxone and Vivitrol under the direction of a board certified addiction physician and treatment team to implement MAT services.

### Appointment Availability

Anyone can call for an appointment or visit a Talbert House site during regular hours to register and receive an assessment. This assessment helps treatment professionals understand your needs and provide you with the best treatment options. Same day appointments are available.

**Walk-In Times:** Monday thru Friday (except holidays) 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

#### Hamilton County

**Walnut Hills** - 2621 Victory Pkwy, 45206  
**Western Hills** - 4968 Glenway Ave, 45238

#### Clinton County

**Wilmington** - 602 S. South Street, 45177

#### Brown County

**Georgetown** - 75 Banting Dr, 45121  
**Mt. Orab** - 116 N. High St, 45154

#### Warren County

**Franklin** - 8401 Claude Thomas Rd, Suite 38, 45005  
**Lebanon** - 759 Columbus Ave, 45036

### Help Starts Here

Should you have any questions or want to schedule an assessment, please call us in  
**Hamilton County** at **(513) 221-HELP** -or- **Brown County** at **(937) 378-4811**.

For those with private insurance or are planning self pay, contact **Gateways** at **(513) 861-0035**.

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