



Opioid Addiction and Medication Assisted Treatment: Fact Sheet

Message: “We have an epidemic in our country.”

Fact: In the US, there were 64,000 overdose deaths in 2016 and estimated to be over 70,000 overdose deaths in 2017

- *Centers for Disease Control*

Fact: In 2012, 259 million prescriptions were written for opioids, which is more than enough to give every American adult their own bottle of pills

- *American Society of Addiction Medicine*

Fact: “Nationwide, the drug overdose epidemic is now claiming more lives than both homicides and automobile accidents combined, and there were more fatalities from drug overdoses in 2015 than AIDS-related deaths during that epidemic’s peak in the 1990s. Drugs are the No. 1 killer of people under 50, and they are shortening the average American life expectancy.”

- *Pewtrust.org*

Fact: 78 people die each day from prescription painkiller overdose.

- *Center for Disease Control*

Message: “The rate of opioid use and deaths is significant in 24-35 year old’s.”

Fact: The age range of opioid overdose deaths is highest in the age range of 24-35 in 70% of the states. The top 10 rates of overdose death per state are in the north-east region including: MD, MA, NJ, NY, OH, PA as well as Illinois, Florida and California.

- *Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2016 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released 2017.*

Message: “Opioid addiction needs more than detox.”

Fact: Relapse on opioids is over 70% (after detoxification)

- *Center for Disease Control*

Message: “Relapse rates after detox only are significant.”

Fact: 2010 study: 91% of heroin addicts relapse after detox only; of those, 59% relapse within one week of discharge

- *Center for Disease Control*

Message: “The problem is heroin AND opioid prescriptions.”

Fact: An increase in opioid prescriptions = An increase of prescription regulations = a decrease in physician prescribed opioid medication = the increase of heroin use

Fact: 21.2 years is the average age for First-Time Use of prescription painkillers in the past year.

- *National Survey on Drug Use and Health*

Fact: 4.3 million Americans are using opioids for non-medical purposes.

- *National Survey on Drug Use and Health*

Fact: 94% of respondents in a 2014 survey of people in treatment for opioid addiction said they chose to use heroin because prescription opioids were “far more expensive and harder to obtain.”

- *JAMA Psychiatry*

Message: “MAT is one solution toward reducing overdose deaths.”

Fact: MAT reduces heroin overdose deaths.

- *American Journal of Public Health*

Message: “The brain is a powerful organ that takes time to heal.”

Fact: When an opioid addict is shown a drug cue after 100 days, they experience withdrawal symptoms

- *Hans and Mass General Study*

Message: “One year of MAT and structure improves recovery rates.”

Fact: Relapse rates drop below 50% for opioid addiction after 1 year of recovery.

- *Journal on Substance Abuse Treatment*

Message: “MAT at the appropriate dosage and time frame can give people a chance to enter a stable phase of recovery.”

Fact: A NIDA study found that once treatment is initiated, both a buprenorphine/naloxone combination and an extended release naltrexone formulation are similarly effective in addiction. Because full detoxification is necessary for treatment with naloxone, initiating treatment among active users was difficult, but once detoxification was complete, both medications had similar effectiveness.

- *National Institute on Drug Abuse*

Fact: The Surgeon General estimated in 2016 that substance misuse and SUD costs society \$442 billion each year.

- *Surgeon General’s Report*

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

<https://www.caron.org/media-center/news-research/thought-leadership/carons-position-on-medication-assisted-treatment>

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6043a4.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). Opioid Painkiller Prescribing, Where You Live Makes a Difference. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/opioid-prescribing/>

Clark RE, Baxter JD, Awew G, O'Connell E, Fisher WH, Barton BA. Risk Factors for Relapse and Higher Costs among Medicaid Members with Opioid Dependence or Abuse: Opioid Agonists, Comorbidities, and Treatment History. *Journal of substance abuse treatment*. 2015;57:75-80. doi:10.1016/j.jsat.2015.05.001.

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<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-FRR1-2014/NSDUH-FRR1-2014.pdf>

Schwartz RP, Gryczynski J, O'Grady KE, et al. Opioid Agonist Treatments and Heroin Overdose Deaths in Baltimore, Maryland, 1995–2009. *American Journal of Public Health*. 2013;103(5):917-922. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2012.301049.

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/policy-and-research/ndcs_2014.pdf