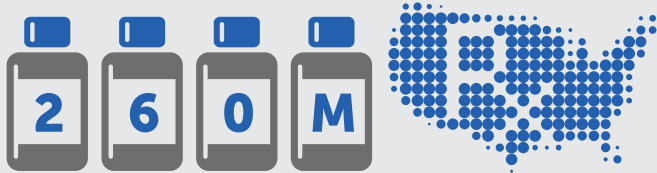


America's Opioid Overdose Epidemic

Opioid abuse in the United States has reached epidemic proportions and continues to grow, with deaths due to opioid overdose killing Americans every day.¹



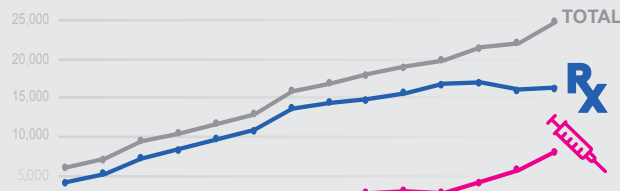
There are more than **260 million opioid prescriptions filled in the United States each year**, enough for every adult in the country to have their own bottle of pills.² This makes the U.S. the world's number one consumer of opioids.³



In 2013, **1.9 million** Americans reported **PRESCRIPTION OPIOID** dependence or abuse, and **517,000** suffered **HEROIN ADDICTION**.⁴



In 2013, opioid overdoses claimed almost **24,500 lives**, an average of one every 21 minutes.¹



Between 2000 and 2013, deaths from **prescription opioid overdose deaths more than tripled** and **deaths from heroin overdose more than quadrupled**.¹



77% of opioid-related deaths occur **outside of medical settings**, and 56% of them happen in people's homes.⁵

Opioids are a class of drugs that include:



Prescription medications

including morphine, codeine, methadone, oxycodone (e.g., OxyContin®, Percocet®), hydrocodone (e.g., Vicodin®, Lortab®), fentanyl (e.g., Duragesic®, Fentora®), hydromorphone (e.g., Dilaudid®, Exalgo®), oxymorphone (e.g., Opana® ER), and buprenorphine (e.g., Subutex®, Suboxone®)



Illegal drugs, including heroin

Recognizing the signs of an opioid overdose may save a life. These include:⁶



Lack of response to loud voices or shaking



Breathing is slow, shallow or irregular, or has stopped



Fingernails and lips turning blue or purple



Extremely small pupils



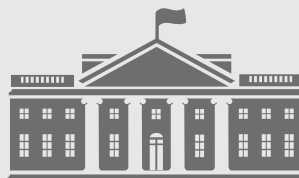
Slow heartbeat and/or low blood pressure



In opioid overdose emergencies, gaining **TIME** is critical to potentially saving a life. Talk to your doctor about emergency treatments before an opioid emergency occurs.

Addressing America's Opioid Overdose Epidemic

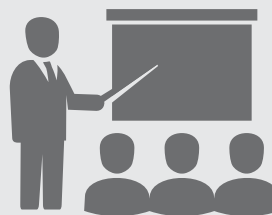
In October 2015, the Obama Administration announced a major **initiative to address the prescription drug abuse and heroin epidemic**. Two important aspects of this effort are ensuring proper prescriber training and improving access to treatment.⁷



"Prescription drug abuse and heroin use have taken a heartbreaking toll on too many Americans and their families, while straining law enforcement and treatment programs."

White House Statement,
October 2015

In September 2015, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) hosted delegates from the 50 states and the District of Columbia to **discuss preventing opioid overdose and opioid use disorder**, the latest in a series of efforts aimed at combating the epidemic.⁸



"Heroin use is increasing at an alarming rate in many parts of society, driven by both the prescription opioid epidemic and cheaper, more available heroin. To reverse this trend, we need an all-of-society response."

Dr. Tom Frieden,
Director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
June 2015

In addition to federal and state government efforts, there is broad consensus across the medical and advocacy communities that **actions must be taken to combat this crisis**. Priorities include strengthening prescriber training, increasing treatment availability and expanding access to opioid overdose antidotes.^{9,10}



"The opioid epidemic knows no boundaries; it touches lives in cities, rural counties and suburban neighborhoods across the country. That's why it's so important that we come together – both state and federal leaders – and take a coordinated and comprehensive approach to address this crisis."

Sylvia Mathews Burwell

Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
September 2015

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