

Audio Scripts, 15-30 sec

Topic: Opioids

Words: 823

Public health emergency - 15 sec

According to the CDC, more than 31,000 people died of an opioid-related overdose in 2015, the worst year on record. The opioid epidemic has been declared a public health emergency. Visit nsc dot org for more information.

Defining opioids – 15 sec

Opioid medications are known by names such as oxycodone, Percocet, Vicodin and morphine, as well as illegal forms like heroin and illicit fentanyl. All are very addictive and can lead to overdose and death. Visit nsc dot org for more information.

How this crisis began – 15 sec

Over the past 15 years, prescription opioid sales quadrupled in the U.S. and overdose deaths increased at a similar rate. As a result, the most fatally misused drug today may be sitting in your medicine cabinet. Visit nsc dot org for more information.

Risks of opioids – 30 sec

Research indicates people who take prescription opioids can quickly develop a dependence on this class of drug. If taken for too long or at too high a dose, prescription opioids can lead to addiction and death, even when used under the care of a doctor. Prescription opioid misuse can also lead victims to other dangerous street drugs. In fact, four out of five new heroin users started by misusing prescription opioids, as these medicines are chemically similar to heroin. Visit nsc dot org for more information.

Ask your doctor about opioids – 30 sec

If you or a loved one are injured or will soon undergo surgery, you may be prescribed opioids. It is good to prepare to discuss this choice of medicine and the associated risks of addiction and overdose.

A combination of ibuprofen and extra strength acetaminophen can be just as effective as opioids for treating acute pain. If opioids are necessary, request a short-term prescription. Many doctors tend to prescribe a 7-10 day supply, but a three-day prescription is typically more appropriate. Visit nsc dot org for more information.

Fentanyl – 15 sec

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid 50 to 100 times stronger than morphine. Illicit fentanyl, made in labs and imported illegally to the U.S., is now being mixed with heroin and other street drugs, resulting in a huge increase in overdose deaths. Visit nsc.org for more information.

Spot the signs of an overdose – 30- sec

A recent National Safety Council poll found that one in four Americans has been directly touched by the opioid epidemic. This makes it important for everyone to be able to spot the signs of an overdose. These signs include slow and loud or stopped breathing, sleepiness progressing to unconsciousness, weak muscles, cold and clammy skin, pinpoint pupils and a slow heart rate. If you are unsure whether someone is experiencing an overdose, it is best to react as though they are. Visit nsc.org for more information.

First aid for an overdose – 30 sec

If you suspect someone may have overdosed, call 911 immediately and prepare to administer first aid. If you suspect the person is unconscious, call their name and gently shake them. If they do not respond, administer CPR to help the person continue breathing, and move them onto their side to keep them from choking in case they become sick. You should also administer Naloxone, which can reverse an opioid overdose. Naloxone has no side effects and cannot harm you. Visit nsc.org for more information.

Naloxone – 30 sec

If you suspect someone of overdosing prepare to administer Naloxone, which can reverse an opioid overdose. If you do not have Naloxone on hand, check with those around you, including the person you suspect of overdosing; many drug users may carry a naloxone kit with them. Naloxone is typically a nasal spray. It has no side effects and cannot harm you. Therefore, it is better to use Naloxone on someone you suspect of overdosing than to not use it at all. Naloxone is legal to purchase without a prescription at pharmacies in nearly every state. Visit nsc.org for more information.

Safe disposal – 30 sec

Many people are unaware that sharing prescription opioids is a felony and flushing them down the sink or toilet is harmful to the environment. The majority of prescription opioid misusers get the drugs from family and friends, yet a recent National Safety Council survey found 31 percent of Americans keep their prescription drugs for future use. If you have expired or unneeded prescription opioids in your home, dispose of them at a safe disposal site in your community, such as a police station or pharmacy. Visit nsc.org for more information.

Treatment options – 15 sec

Treatment works and people suffering from opioid use disorders can successfully recover. The most effective treatments for opioid use disorder include counseling and medications, such as methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone. If you or someone you know needs assistance with opioid use disorder, call the 24/7 treatment locator 1-800-662-4357. Visit nsc.org for more information.