



SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Affiliated with National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A., Associated Country Women of the World and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service
SCFCL website: <http://www.scfcl.com>

Leader Training Guide

Understanding Opioids

Objectives:

1. Participants will explain what opioids are
2. Participants will explain why opioids are addictive
3. Participants will identify the health/behavioral effects of opioids
4. Participants will be able to locate local resources that assist with opioid addiction

Lesson Overview/Introduction:

Opioids are a class of drugs that include illegal drugs like Heroin, synthetic (man-made) opioids such as Fentanyl, and pain relievers available legally by prescription such as oxycontin, hydrocodone (Vicodin), Codeine, Morphine and many others. Opioids contain a chemical called Dopamine. Dopamine is called "the feel-good chemical". The feel-good chemical doesn't stick around long and has some pretty serious side effects. This leads a person to find things to keep that feeling going. Dependence to these drugs can lead to addiction, overdose and even death. In 2016, over 42,249 people died of Opioid overdose. That's more than 115 people daily. In this lesson, we will learn what opioids are, how they effects the body, and identify local resources to combat the opioid epidemic.

What are opioids and why are they addictive?

Opioids are drugs that block the feeling of pain & release a chemical called dopamine. Dopamine is the "feel good" chemical in the brain. However, that feeling is short lived. This leads a person to want more of that feeling, so they take more of the opioid. However, dependence on Opioids happens with repeated use. Eventually, the part of the brain that releases Dopamine only works normally when the drugs are consumed. When a person is dependent on opioids but they are unavailable, the body starts to feel withdrawal symptoms such as fevers, diarrhea, vomiting, sweating, and chills. These symptoms can be confused with the Flu, but they go away quicker. (See CDC Preventing Opioid Overdose Handout)

Opioid addiction usually begins with prescription drugs. People usually try to be responsible and take the prescribed dosage. But over time, people begin to build tolerance of the drug and begin to increase the dosage by taking multiple doses. Some people become dependent on the drugs they were prescribed and start searching for other things like Heroin to relieve their pain. Prescription painkillers like oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, and the illegal drug Heroin have similar effects on the body because they are chemically similar.

Addiction to Opioids are not limited to illegal opioids like Heroin but is also linked to the misuse of prescription drugs. Misuse of prescription drugs can be as simple as taking an extra pill, or taking pills from family, friends, or strangers. Opioids at too high of a dose, or over a long period of time increases the risk of addiction, overdose, and even death. In 2016, more than 40,000 people died of Opioid overdoses in America. That's more than 115 people daily.

What are the risk factors of developing an opioid addiction?

Your risk of developing an addiction increases after the 5th consecutive day of taking prescription opioids. There are many other factors that increase your risks of developing an addiction to Opioids. They are as followed:

- Prior drug and alcohol addiction/problems
- Risk taking thrill seeking behavior
- Poverty
- Young Age
- Mental Disorders

Women are more likely to have chronic pain (pain that last longer than 6 months) than men. Women are also more likely to be prescribed higher doses of Opioids for a longer period of time. Some women have biological tendencies to become dependent on pain relievers.

Steps to prevent opioid addiction:

Opioids are safest when used for a short period of time (3 or fewer days) to manage acute pain from sprains, fractures, or other injuries or surgeries. Talk with your doctor about taking the lowest dose possible for the shortest amount of time.

If you are living with Chronic Pain, Opioids are most likely to become addictive. Ask your doctor about a long-term treatment plans free of opioids, that allow you to enjoy your life.

Help safeguard Opioids while taking them and dispose of them safely when you are no longer taking them.

Contact your local law enforcement agency, Drug Enforcement Agency, your local trash/recycling service, or your local Drug and Alcohol program about local "takeback programs". If there are no takeback programs then talk with your pharmacist for guidance.

Lesson Summary:

Opioids are the most dangerous prescribed drug that are often time misused and are prescribed at alarming rates. It is fairly easy to develop an addiction to Opioids. Your risk of developing an addiction to Opioids increases after the 5th day of taking them. There are many other risk factors for developing an addiction to Opioids, including a history of drug or alcohol problems. Women are more likely than men to develop an addiction to Opioids. To reduce your risk of developing an

Opioid Addiction talk with your doctor about other options to manage your pain. If you experience chronic pain contact MUSC's Pain Rehabilitation Clinic to see if this program would be a good fit.

If you feel that Opioids are affecting members of your family provide them information of resources that would offer support to them (See Sources). You can protect your family from developing an Opioid addiction by disposing of drugs properly and safeguarding those drugs from your family. If you see someone experiencing overdose call 911 immediately. It is up to all of us to remedy the Opioid Epidemic.

Suggested Activities:

Share the following videos with others to gain a better understanding of the Opioid Epidemic:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7IHw0mklkWE&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcENrBVXPsY&feature=youtu.be>

Talk to your family members and kids about the risk of developing Opioid Addiction use the following website to get some conversation starters:

<https://drugfree.org/heroin-opioid-epidemic/>

Share the attached handout of Narcotics Anonymous Meeting Locations with those who may be struggling with Opioid Addiction

Share Information about the MUSC's Pain Rehabilitation Program with those who may be struggling with Chronic Pain- (843) 792-6895 and visit their website at:

<https://muschealth.org/medical-services/pain-rehabilitation>

Organize a Pill Take Back Event and have locations available locally for safe disposal of drugs

Suggested Materials:

Narcotics Anonymous Meeting Location Handout

MUSC Pain Rehabilitation Program Handout

CDC's Preventing an Opioid Overdose Handout

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Sources/References:

“Am I Vulnerable to Opioid Addiction?” *Mayo Clinic*, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 16 Feb. 2018, www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/prescription-drug-abuse/in-depth/how-opioid-addiction-occurs/art-20360372.

“Heroin & the Opioid Epidemic: From Understanding to Action.” *Where Families Find Answers on Substance Use | Partnership for Drug-Free Kids*, 2018, www.drugfree.org/heroin-opioid-epidemic/.

“Opioid Addiction - Genetics Home Reference - NIH.” *U.S. National Library of Medicine*, National Institutes of Health, 2019, www.ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/opioid-addiction#resources.

“Opioid Overdose.” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 19 Dec. 2018, www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/opioids/index.html.

Know the Signs. *Save a Life.*

Opioid Overdose Basics

Prescription opioids (like hydrocodone, oxycodone, and morphine) and illicit opioids (like heroin and illegally made fentanyl) are powerful drugs that have a risk of a potentially fatal overdose. Anyone who uses opioids can experience an overdose, but certain factors may increase risk including but not limited to:



- Combining opioids with alcohol or certain other drugs
- Taking high daily dosages of prescription opioids
- Taking more opioids than prescribed
- Taking illicit or illegal opioids, like heroin or illicitly-manufactured fentanyl, that could possibly contain unknown or harmful substances
- Certain medical conditions, such as sleep apnea, or reduced kidney or liver function
- Age greater than 65 years old

Death from an opioid overdose happens when too much of the drug overwhelms the brain and interrupts the body's natural drive to breathe.

Learn more about opioids to protect yourself and your loved ones from opioid abuse, addiction, and overdose: www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose



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PREVENTING AN OPIOID OVERDOSE

Signs and Symptoms of an Opioid Overdose

During an overdose, breathing can be dangerously slowed or stopped, causing brain damage or death. It's important to recognize the signs and act fast. Signs include:

- Small, constricted “pinpoint pupils”
- Falling asleep or loss of consciousness
- Slow, shallow breathing
- Choking or gurgling sounds
- Limp body
- Pale, blue, or cold skin

What To Do If You Think Someone Is Overdosing

It may be hard to tell if a person is high or experiencing an overdose. If you aren't sure, it's best to treat it like an overdose— you could save a life.

- ① Call 911 immediately.
- ② Administer naloxone, if available.
- ③ Try to keep the person awake and breathing.
- ④ Lay the person on their side to prevent choking.
- ⑤ Stay with him or her until emergency workers arrive.



Ask your doctor about naloxone - a safe medication that can quickly stop an opioid overdose. It can be injected into the muscle or sprayed into the nose to rapidly block the effects of the opioid on the body.



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Search results for State: 'South Carolina'

Description	Phone Number and Website	Country	State	Area Code
Carolina Region	http://crna.org/	USA	South Carolina	
Southeast Zonal Forum	http://www.sezf.org/index.html	USA	South Carolina	
Carolina Regional Service Office	http://crna.org	USA	South Carolina	308
Central Carolina Area (Greater Columbia)	Phone: 803.254-6262 http://midcarolinana.org/	USA	South Carolina	803
Greater Columbia Area (Bamberg, Columbia, Orangeburg)	Phone: 803.254-6262 http://midcarolinana.org	USA	South Carolina	803
Upper South Carolina Area (Greater Greenville)	Phone: 864.282-0109 http://www.crna.org	USA	South Carolina	803, 864
Sun City Area (Myrtle Beach, Georgetown)	Phone: 843.449-6262 http://www.suncityna.org	USA	South Carolina	843
South Coastal Area (Greater Southern Charleston, Hilton Head Island)	Phone: 843.832-5001 https://www.crna.org/	USA	South Carolina	843
Port City Area (Greater Metro Charleston)	Phone: 843.852-3001 http://www.portcityyna.com	USA	South Carolina	843
Sun City Area (Myrtle Beach, Georgetown)	Phone: 866.515-8962 http://www.suncityna.org	USA	South Carolina	843
North Central Carolina Area (Boiling Springs, Duncan, Gaffney, Greer, Inman, Spartanburg)	Phone: 800.465-4954	USA	South Carolina	864
GAP Area (Anderson)	Phone: 800.922-5305	USA	South Carolina	864