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Prescription Opioid Data | Drug Overdose

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Prescription opioids are often used to treat chronic and acute pain and, when used appropriately, can be an important component of treatment. However, serious risks are associated with their use, and it is essential to carefully consider the risks of using prescription opioids alongside their benefits. These risks include misuse, opioid use disorder (addiction), overdoses, and death.

Prescription opioids



- Can be **prescribed** for **moderate-to-severe** pain, after **surgery** or **injury**, or pain from health conditions like **cancer**.
- Includes drugs like hydrocodone, oxycodone, codeine, and morphine.
- **Risks** include **misuse, addiction,**

overdose, and death, especially with long term use.

Millions of Americans suffer from pain and are often prescribed opioids to treat their conditions. However, the dangers of prescription misuse, opioid use disorder, and overdose have been a growing problem throughout the United States.

Since the 1990s, when the amount of opioids prescribed to patients began to grow, the number of overdoses and deaths from prescription opioids has also increased. Even as the amount of opioids prescribed and sold for pain has increased, the amount of pain that Americans report has not similarly changed.

From 1999 to 2016, more than 200,000 people died in the United States from overdoses related to prescription opioids. Overdose deaths involving prescription opioids were five times higher in 2016 than in 1999.¹

References

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