



## OPIOID OVERDOSE CONTINUES TO BE A MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM IN THE UNITED STATES.

- In 2020, 902,000 people 12 or older reported using heroin and 9.3 million reported misusing prescription pain relievers within the past 12 months.
- 75% of young people who misuse prescription painkillers get them from friends and family, not doctors.
- According to the National Center for Health Statistics, past 12-month overdose deaths in Virginia increased by 35.5% between 2020 and 2021.
- Opioids affect your brain and your body. They are addictive and can kill you.

### 1 What are Opioids?

Opioids usually come in pill form and are prescribed to reduce pain. When opioids are taken as prescribed by a medical professional, they are relatively safe and can reduce pain effectively. However, dependence and addiction are still potential risks when taking prescription opioids.

### 2 What does Opioid Misuse Look Like?

- Taking a drug that was prescribed for someone else
- Taking a larger dose than directed
- Taking the drug in a different way than directed. For example, crushing tablets to snort or inject them is a form of misuse
- Using the medicine for another purpose, such as getting high

### 3 Common Signs of Opioid Addiction

- The inability to control opioid use
- Uncontrollable cravings
- Drowsiness
- Changes in sleep habits
- Weight loss
- Frequent flu-like symptoms
- Decreased libido
- Lack of hygiene
- Changes in exercise habits
- Isolation from family or friends
- Stealing from family, friends or businesses
- New financial difficulties

### 4 How to Help?

- Know the warning signs
- Get help from experts
- Voice your suspicion
- Choose the right time to talk to your child
- Be a positive influence
- Place prescription drugs out of sight
- Do not share prescription drugs
- Talk to someone you trust- a parent, healthcare provider, or school counselor
- Contact SAMHSA's National Helpline **1-800-662-HELP (4357)**