

## What are Opioids?

Prescription opioids are a category of commonly prescribed painkillers. Doctors prescribe them, typically in pill form, to help patients with severe or chronic pain. When they're properly prescribed and taken as directed by a medical professional, they're relatively safe and can be beneficial. But there is always a risk of addiction.

### Common Prescription Opioid Painkillers

Generic Name	Brand Name
Oxycodone	OxyContin® Percodan® Percocet®
Hydrocodone	Vicodin® Lortab® Lorcet®
Diphenoxylate	Lomotil®
Morphine	Kadian® Avinza® MS Contin®
Codeine	Various Brand Names
Fentanyl	Duragesic®
Propoxyphene	Darvon®
Hydromorphone	Dilaudid®
Meperidine	Demerol®
Methadone	Various Brand Names

## Where to find help

### Mental Health & Substance Use

Assessment & Referral Resources

Bacon Street	253-0111
Colonial Behavioral Health	
Adult Assessment	220-3200
Child Assessment	253-4047
24-hr Emergency Services	378-5555
SpiritWorks	903-0000

[www.WmbgCares.org](http://www.WmbgCares.org)

(Link to community resources)

### Safe Medication Disposal Sites

#### CVS Pharmacy

7529 Richmond Road  
Williamsburg, VA 23188

4432 George Washington Memorial Hwy.  
Yorktown, VA 23692

#### McDonald Army Health Center

576 Jefferson Avenue  
Ft. Eustis, VA 23604

#### Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center

100 Sentara Circle  
Williamsburg, VA 23188

#### The Prescription Shoppe

5223 Monticello Avenue, Suite C  
Williamsburg, VA 23188

#### Walgreens

1309 Richmond Road  
Williamsburg, VA 23185

#### Williamsburg Drug Company

240 McLaws Circle, Suite 147  
Williamsburg, VA 23185

1310 Jamestown Road  
Williamsburg, VA 23185



**HISTORIC TRIANGLE**  
DRUG PREVENTION COALITION

## The Dangers of Pain Medications



Serving James City County, City of Poquoson,  
City of Williamsburg and York County

## What is prescription painkiller abuse?

- Taking prescription painkillers in a way that was not prescribed, such as taking too many pills at one time, combining pills with alcohol or other drugs, or crushing pills.
- Taking someone else's prescription painkiller, even if you're doing so for the medication's intended purpose (e.g., to ease pain).
- Taking prescription painkillers for the sole purpose of feeling good or getting high.

## Who is at risk for addiction?

It's important to remember that the medication itself is addictive. Even someone who takes opioids as prescribed by a doctor can develop a physical dependence on the drug, especially if prescribed for several weeks or more.

Mixing opioids with other drugs, such as benzodiazepines (e.g., Xanax®, Valium®, and Ativan®) can be especially dangerous.

## What are the dangers of prescription painkillers?

Taking just one dose too large can cause serious health problems and potentially lead to death.

Here's a dose of reality: Deaths from unintended drug overdoses have been rising sharply in recent years. In 2016, prescription painkillers accounted for more than 14,400 deaths in the United States—about 40 a day.

Remember, the risk of overdose and death increases exponentially when prescription painkillers are combined with other drugs or alcohol.

While prescription opioid painkillers can be helpful and beneficial in some circumstances, about 11.5 million adults misuse prescription painkillers at least once during the course of a year, and 3.3 million people ages 12 and older are currently misusing them.

**More than half of people who misuse prescription painkillers get the drugs for free from friends or relatives.** Many people store painkillers in the medicine cabinet, but storing your medications in an easily accessible place means they're available for children, teens, or others to find and abuse.

## Safe Storage

### Store them out of sight!

Keep your prescription painkillers secure and out of sight. This can prevent them from falling into the hands of someone who can abuse them. It can also prevent someone in your house from accidentally taking the medication. And when there are children and teens in the house, it's best to keep painkillers out of sight and out of reach.

### Lock them up!

Store your prescription painkillers and other medications in a lock box, safe, or locked medicine cabinet. This is one of the most effective ways to prevent abuse or accidental use. Many companies offer lockable medication storage options.

### Safely dispose of them!

Unused medications are more dangerous than you think. That's why it's vital to safely dispose of unneeded and expired prescriptions. Bring unused painkillers to an approved local drop box, which may be located at your local hospital, police department or pharmacy.