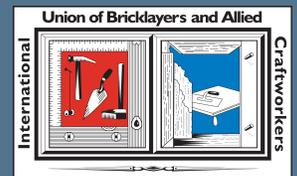


# OPIOID AND NARCOTIC PAINKILLERS: KNOW THE BENEFITS, UNDERSTAND THE DANGERS



*More than 2.3 million emergency room visits were made in 2010 because of reactions to drugs. Narcotic pain relievers, also known as opioids, accounted for more than 400,000, or 17%, of these visits.*



Opioids are potent painkiller medications prescribed to ease many types of pain, the flu, or a cough. **Opioids are extremely dangerous and can be lethal, especially when not taken as prescribed.** It's easy to get hooked on opioids. For every person prescribed opioids for chronic pain, one in four will become addicted. Accidental addiction to opioids is common; tens of thousands die from accidental overdose.

Inform your doctor if you work in construction, where opioid use can be a safety hazard. If opioid medications are necessary, ask for a short-term prescription. Also ask about alternative, non-opioid pain medications, and therapies such as acupuncture, physical therapy, therapeutic massage and counseling. Avoid mixing opioids with sleeping pills, anti-anxiety medications, and alcohol. Let your doctor know if you have a history of addiction problems, and what other medications you take. If you take opioids, take them safely.

**BAC  
MAP**



**Member  
Assistance  
Program**

UNITED STATES and CANADA

**1-888-880-8222**

*If you are struggling with chronic pain and are worried about opioid addiction, call the BAC MAP today for free, professional guidance and assistance. All calls to MAP are strictly confidential - federal law protects privacy.*

*Your local union and BAC applaud your courage in reaching out for help. Give MAP a call today!*

Name Brand	Generic Name	Illness Treated
Vicodin	Hydrocodone	injuries and dental pain
OxyContin, Percocet	Oxycodone	Chronic or severe pain
Kadian, Avinza	Morphine	severe pain
Lomotil	Codeine	cough, severe diarrhea
Floriset with Codeine, Phrenilin with Caffeine and Codeine, Ascomp with Codeine	Codeine	headache
Cheratussin AC, Robitussin-AC, Iphen-C NR, Gualatussin AC	Codeine	cough
Phenflu, Maxiflu, Rolatuss, Calcidrine	Codeine	cough



## Common Reactions

While opioids can be effective medications, you might have negative reactions. They can make you:

- sleepy
- sick to your stomach
- constipated
- feel confused, or
- dizzy

These reactions can happen suddenly and while taking the usual dose of your opioid medication. Be careful to follow your doctor's or pharmacist's instructions. Opioids often take about 90 minutes to become fully active in your body. Be sure to check the warning labels on the bottle: be careful about going about ordinary activities such as driving, and also work activities such as climbing, lifting, or operating machinery.



## ***What Can You Do To Prevent Problems?***

While opioid medications can be effective to treat pain, you may want to ask your doctor if you can try a non-opioid drug first. Medical research shows that opioids are not more effective for most pain.

Recognize that opioids are addictive, and using them should be your last resort option.

If you are suffering from hard-to-treat pain, call BAC MAP for free, confidential information and referrals to a variety of pain management options.

If you have any medicine left over, your local pharmacy can tell you how to safely dispose of it. You also may go online at the U.S. Food and Drug administration website to learn how to throw away the medicine:

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/BuyingUsingMedicineSafely/UnderstandingOver-the-CounterMedicines/ucm107163.pdf>.

***Drug overdoses now kill  
more Americans than  
guns or car accidents!***

### ***Opioids Have Serious Side-Effects***

If you take more than prescribed, reactions include:

- clammy skin,
- weak muscles,
- dangerously low blood pressure,
- slowed or stopped breathing,
- coma, or
- death.

### ***Don't Mix Opioid Medications***

If you combine opioid medications with alcohol or other drugs, such as tranquilizers, sedatives, or sleeping pills, it could kill you.

### ***Don't Borrow Opioid Painkillers***

If you take opioids without a prescription, you are risking your life. Further, testing positive for opioids on workplace drug screen tests without a valid prescription could result in a positive drug-test result.

### ***Don't Share Opioid Painkillers***

Never share opioids that your doctor has given you with someone else, even family members. Another person may react differently to the medications. You may be endangering someone's life if you give them your medicine.

### ***Long-Term Problems: Tolerance***

If you take opioid medication for a long time, your body can feel less of their pain alleviating effect. You may be tempted to take more to feel the effects. Do not use more without talking to your doctor. Taking more can lead to addiction, overdose or death.