



## Opiates

Opiates are central nervous system depressants. Opiates have a high potential for abuse and are found in a variety of forms. Some opiates are prescribed by doctors for pain relief, like morphine and codeine. Others, like heroin, the most potent and commonly abused opiate, are dangerous and illegal.

## Statistics

- Studies show that an estimated 2.4 million people have used opiates at some time in their life.
- Heroin is the most common substance derived from opium. In addition, oxycotin is a highly abuse opiate. Oxycotin is sometimes referred to as hillbilly heroin, oxy or oxycotton. Continued use of oxycotin can lead to severe respiratory depression and even death.
- 19.9 million Americans have abused pain relievers (like Oxycotin) in their lifetime.

## Effects

- Side effects of opiate use can include feelings of euphoria, slowed breathing, reduced heart rate and brain activity, depressed appetite, thirst and high tolerance for pain.
- Opiates are often injected; this type of use increases the risk for disease contraction, especially for diseases like hepatitis, tetanus or AIDS.

## Tips

- Opiates are highly dangerous and addictive. If you are using drugs or suspect that someone you love is, contact a health care professional immediately for help and to learn about treatment options.
- Methadone treatment - Methadone suppresses narcotic withdrawal for between 24 and 36 hours. Because methadone is effective in eliminating withdrawal symptoms, it is used in detoxifying opiate addicts. **Methadone treatment does work, but should only be administered by a licensed health care professional.**

**ADAMH is your community safety net. If you or someone you love needs help call 276-CARE, the front door to the ADAMH system of care.**