

# What You Need to Know About OPIOIDS



PRESCRIPTION PAINKILLERS  
FENTANYL  
HEROIN

9% OF 9TH GRADERS AND  
14% OF 11TH GRADERS  
IN VENTURA COUNTY SAY  
THEY'VE USED PRESCRIPTION  
MEDICATIONS TO GET HIGH.\*



## What Are Opioids?

### PRESCRIPTION PAINKILLERS

Opioids are powerful psychoactive chemicals that have the ability to effectively relieve serious pain by binding with key receptors in the brain. When used as prescribed, opioids may help relieve and control severe or chronic pain.

Because prescription opioids can create a sense of euphoria, some people misuse them to get high. **If used too much, dependency and addiction can occur and the risk of overdose increases.**

Commonly misused opioids include: hydrocodone (Vicodin), oxycodone (OxyContin, Roxicodone), tramadol and codeine (cough medicine).

### FENTANYL

Fentanyl was developed as a strong prescription painkiller for patients with severe, long-term pain. It is similar to morphine but is 50 to 100 times more potent and **extremely dangerous to misuse**. Improperly ingesting or touching even a tiny amount can cause overdose or death.

### HEROIN

Heroin is a **dangerous and illegal** street opioid. People sometimes try it as a replacement for legal pain medication but it has no medical use. It is highly addictive and often deadly.

## What You Can Do

### WATCH OUT FOR PRESCRIPTION MISUSE

- Experimenting or sharing
- Ignoring label directions
- Combining unknown drugs
- Taking meds to get high

### LOOK FOR WARNING SIGNS

- Changes in physical appearance
- Loss of interest or motivation
- Different friends or activities
- Unexplained pills or paraphernalia

### DON'T MAKE IT EASY

- Track and secure all medications
- Block access to online drug sources
- Properly dispose of unused medication
- Go to [VenturaCountyResponds.org](https://www.venturacountyresponds.org) for disposal information
- Report suspicious activity privately to [pharm.tip@ventura.org](mailto:pharm.tip@ventura.org)

### IF YOU NEED HELP

Get support. Talk to your health care provider, school counselor, prevention/treatment professional, friends or family.

For confidential treatment services  
**CALL 1-844-385-9200**

### VENTURA COUNTY RX ABUSE & HEROIN WORKGROUP

Preventing Opioid Abuse in Ventura County



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Preventing Opioid Abuse in Ventura County

[VenturaCountyResponds.org](https://www.venturacountyresponds.org)

\*2016 California Healthy Kids Survey, Dr. Heidi Christensen, PhD

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