What You Need to Know about Rx ABUSE & HEROIN

It’s happening in Ventura County

Meds like OxyContin are gateway drugs
WHAT IS OXYCONTIN?

OxyContin is an effective painkiller, an opioid that provides relief in patients with severe or chronic pain when used as prescribed.

OxyContin can be highly addictive, is often easily available, and is known as a popular party drug.

How is OxyContin abused?

OxyContin is intended to be taken orally. When abused it is also crushed and snorted, smoked or mixed with water and injected.

Other commonly abused opioids include: codeine, Vicodin, Fentanyl, morphine, Percodan, Percocet, Opana, roxycodone and methadone.

What’s the connection with heroin?

Some users of opioids such as OxyContin move on to street or “tar” heroin. It costs approximately one third as much as OxyContin and satisfies the same craving.

HEROIN?

Heroin is an illegal opioid that is extremely addictive, harmful and difficult to quit. It is smoked, snorted or injected.

Short-term effects: A “rush” followed by long periods of drowsiness. Nausea, vomiting and severe itching may occur. Thinking, heartbeat and breathing slow, sometimes to the point of death.

Long-term effects: Infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, and heart or lung problems may occur, along with abscesses or collapsed veins. Withdrawal symptoms are severe and include pain, insomnia, diarrhea and vomiting.

Sources: * 2010 California Healthy Kids Survey; **Heidi Christensen, PhD, Educational Research, Ventura County Office of Education.
Look out for...

slang often used when texting:

OXYCODONE
80’s beans OC orange crayons oxys roxys

HYDROCODONE
hydros

SUBOXONE
subs

VICODIN
vics norcos watsons

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Don’t make it easy

• Lock up your meds
• Keep track of pill quantities
• Properly dispose of unused medications. Go to VenturaCountyLimits.org/Rx for disposal bin locations.
• Block access to online pharmacies

Watch for warning signs of abuse

PHYSICAL:
• Weight loss
• Drowsiness
• Sweating
• Tremors and twitching
• Breathing difficulty

BEHAVIORAL
• Drop in school performance
• Loss of interest
• Change in activities or friends

ENVIRONMENTAL
• Money issues
• Missing valuables
• Unexplained pills
• Drug paraphernalia
• Lost prescriptions

If you suspect drug abuse

Get support. Call your health care provider, school counselor, prevention/treatment professional, friends or family.
The text said “cool pilz @prty.” Oxys made me feel good and for a while I got them free from friends. I liked being high, but then I needed more and more pills every day just to feel normal. I started buying them, which took all my money and whatever I could steal. When a friend called up and got us some heroin, it was way cheaper than pills and as easy as ordering pizza. I was totally hooked.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OXYCONTIN, PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE AND HEROIN

NIDA: www.drugabuse.gov

www.VenturaCountyLimits.org/Rx

PREVENTING OPIOID ABUSE IN VENTURA COUNTY

VENTURA COUNTY PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE WORKGROUP