

# Pain medication addiction



Is there someone who may be distant, always itching, not being completely honest, or do they have a difference in attitude or are they falling asleep off and off at different times during the day? These are all common signs that a loved one may be addicted to pain pills. A person can take pain medications without abusing them but oftentimes a person falls into the trap and eventually does start to abuse them. Although the pills are needed for pain, there is a very strong abuse rate for two main reasons.

First, they are hard to get off. But most importantly, pain pills are addicting. There are different kinds of medications that a person can take, which includes prescription or non-prescription medications. All medications regardless of what they are or what they do should be taken with caution. Non-prescription medications include Tylenol, Excedrin, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Aleve, Advil, and many others.

These can be used to get rid of the common headache, arthritis, or muscle and joint pain. In some cases it may take weeks before a specific medication starts to work, therefore making a person turn to another option (WebMD, 2008). Prescription medications such as pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, and sedatives are very useful treatment to help with any disorder or problem. Tranquilizers are known as “ a drug used to reduce mental disturbance” (Merriam-Webster, 2008). Stimulants are common known as “ an agent (as a drug) that produces a temporary increase of the functional activity or efficiency of an organism or any of its parts” (Merriam-Webster, 2008). Sedatives are known for “ tending to calm, moderate, or tranquilize nervousness or excitement” (Merriam-Webster, 2008).

There is a very common problem in the abuse and addiction to pain pills. The use of medications such as, depressants, opioids and stimulants that can lead to a very growing problem in America. Pain relievers are abused by about 5. 2 million people, tranquilizers are abused by about 1. 8 million people, stimulants are abused by about 1.

2 million, and sedatives are abused by about 0. 4 million (Pain Killer Addict Information, 2008). There were approximately 7. 0 million people who were current users of psychotherapeutic drugs taken without a prescription in 2006, which is approximately 2. 8 percent of the U.

S. population (Pain Killer Addict Information, 2008). Psychotherapy drugs are a class of drugs that are described as those that target the central nervous system and that includes drugs that are used to treat psychiatric disorders (Pain Killer Addict Information, 2008). The abuse of prescription drugs includes 3 major classifications of drugs; opiates, depressants and stimulants.

People can become addicted or commonly referred to as chemically dependent (Pain Killer Addict Information, 2008). Opiates are commonly referred to as a drug (as morphine or codeine) containing or derived from opium and tending to induce sleep and alleviate pain (Merriam-Webster 2008). Depressants are one that depresses; specifically: an agent that reduces a bodily functional activity or an instinctive desire (as appetite) (Merriam-Webster 2008). In a class of their own Opiates include many different medications.

Some of those medications could be Percocet, Oxycontin, Vicodin, or Lortab (WebMD 2008). In opioids there is a very severe risk for addiction and overdose. A common way by the abusers is to crush the pills and inject them with a needle or to snort the contents, which strengthens their risk for respiratory depression and death (Pain Killer Addict Information, 2008).

When a person combines opioids with other drugs, including alcohol, can intensify respiratory distress (Pain Killer Addict Information, 2008).

Depressants are very addicting and withdrawal dangers (Pain Killer Addict Information, 2008). These types of drugs can be highly addictive and in habitual users when trying to get off of them without a physician's guidance can bring about severe withdrawal symptoms that must be properly observed and managed by a medical professional (Pain Killer Addict Information, 2008).

Overdosing can cause severe breathing problems and eventually lead to death, especially when these drugs are combined with alcohol or other medications. (These are the different sizes and shapes of Vicodin) A common pain medication that is abused is Oxycontin. Oxycotin is a strong narcotic pain medication similar to morphine (WebMD 2008). This medication is to be used very moderately. Also, it is supposed to be taken on a regular basis, not on an as needed basis. When taking this medication it is very important that the person taking it swallows the pill whole.

Chewed, crushed, or broken tablets may release a possibly life-threatening amount of medication into the body (WebMD, 2008). These pills release oxycodone into the body slowly over a 12-hour period (Pain killer, 2005). The time release on these pills make the drug safe for patients and keeps them

free of pain for 12 hours at a time, as long as the pill is taken whole (Pain killer, 2005). Oxycontin helps 2 million Americans function during the day and sleep at night (Pain killer, 2005). Between 1999 and 2001 the use of these pills has quadrupled (Pain killer, 2005).

These are the different colors and size of the pain pill Oxycontin) It used to be that parents locked the door to the liquor cabinet so their teens will not be tempted to sample the merchandise. Today, they may need to invent a locking medicine cabinet. As many as one in 10 has taken prescription stimulants or tranquilizers illegally and as many as one in six teens has misused prescription pain medication (Popping Pills, 2006). Substances that stimulate the activity of the central nervous system are Stimulates. These drugs are often referred to as “uppers” because they speed up mental and physical processes in the body.

There are both legal and illegal stimulants. Legal stimulates include nicotine (found in tobacco products) and caffeine. Stimulants like methylphenidate are prescribed to increase alertness and physical activity. Illegal stimulants include methamphetamine, cocaine and crack. Ritalin and Adderall are frequently traded and misused drugs caught attention.

A federal advisory panel recommended strong warning labels for attention this deficit/ hyperactivity disorder drugs (Popping Pills, 2006). When a parent has the all important talk with their children they need to be sure to emphasize the importance of abuse in drugs including prescription ones as well. The rise among younger girls is growing as well (Substance Abuse, Addiction & Women, 2006). For example, the percent of teen girls ages 12-

17 that have used prescription medications was around 10.1 percent compared to 8.6 of teen boys (Substance Abuse, Addiction & Women, 2006).

The abuse of prescription medications has jumped 212% between 1992 and 2003 (Substance Abuse, Addiction & Women, 2006). The abuse of prescription drugs is one of the fastest-growing categories of substance abuse in women. Caucasian women are more likely to abuse the different kind of prescription drugs than women of other ethnic backgrounds or men (Substance Abuse, Addiction & Women, 2006). Overall, women are 43 percent more likely to use prescription medications for a non-medical use (Substance Abuse, Addiction & Women, 2006). All in all there are about 15 million teen girls and women that use illegal drugs and prescription medications.

There are some concerns when a person is ready to get off of the addicting medications. First off, the person addicted has to be completely ready and committed or else he or she could relapse and fall into the habit of doing the addictive habits again. When a person goes through withdrawal it is almost as if they are "sick". Some common signs of withdrawal could be discomfort, depression, vomiting, diarrhea, shaking as well as moodiness. The fight against pain medication addiction is a life-long struggle. A major concern for the individual who have overcome this addiction is to face the fear of having to start taking the medications again, for whatever reason, be it surgery or another injury.

If that does happen the person needs to be completely honest and open with the doctor or nurse and inform them about their history with pain pills. There

are non-narcotic prescription medications that are available and can prove relief without the risk of addiction occurring again (Pain Pill Addiction Withdrawal, 2007). There is a support community that is out there for abusers that need and want the treatment to get off of the highly addictive medications. There are many signs that a person can look for when trying to determine that they are in need of help.

Requesting prescriptions from multiple doctors is very common as well as faking an injury just to obtain more pain medication (Pain-pill addiction: What's the risk? 2008). Taking pain medication to deal with other problems, such as anxiety or stress is also common (Pain-pill addiction: What's the risk? 2008). Additionally, the usage of other medications and alcohol is a common sign to look for (Pain-pill addiction: What's the risk? 2008). One form of treatment is taking another pill commonly known as Soboxone (New drug treats the new face of addiction.

2008). This pill can be taken from home on a daily basis. Follow-ups from the doctors are needed to ensure that the person is not abusing the medication (New drug treats the new face of addiction. 2008).

Methadone is another option when receiving treatment. A person has to go to a clinic each day to receive this form (New drug treats the new face of addiction. 2008). The patient must drink or take the pill in front of a person to ensure that it will not get out onto the streets and be abused (New drug treats the new face of addiction. 2008).

If there is someone out there that may be in need of help they can go to their family doctor and discuss the options and outcomes of this problem.

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When speaking with the doctor it is very important that the patient is very honest and open about their problem. The doctor will address the situation and go from there. There are counseling programs that a patient can enroll in so they have someone to talk to about their history and problems. Often times, the counselor themselves at one point in time was an addict of something. Another option is checking into an in-patient rehab facility.

There the addict will be able to ensure that all the proper medical attention that they need is there. Here, they will encounter a primary doctor, a counselor either in a group setting or one on one setting, and interacting with other patients. While taking the medications a person does not take them to intend to turn into an addict. There is help out there for those people who need it. In most cases it is just a phone call away.

So please keep in mind that when someone has a dramatic change in the way that they are please see that they receive help soon. If wondering and second questioning whether or not the loved one may need help please do not think about it for too long, the person that is addicted may slip into a path and have a hard time coming back. Remember that it is never too late for help. It may be a strong struggle ahead but one can live a healthy and fulfilling life after they are clean from these very addicting medications.

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