

Attention Parents of Student Athletes:

Prescription painkillers can be addictive.
It only takes a little to lose a lot.



The danger of addiction is closer than you think...

A growing number of student athletes are becoming addicted to painkillers after being prescribed pain medication for an injury. Common drugs that are given are: Vicodin, OxyContin or Percocet. These drugs are opioids. Heroin is also made from opioids.

For some, it can take as little as a week to become dependent on prescription painkillers.¹ Nearly half of young people who inject heroin start by using Rx drugs.²

Stop addiction before it takes over.

As a parent or student athlete, ask questions...

- "What are the side effects of this medication?"
- "Do I have to finish taking all of these pills?"
- "When can I switch to acetaminophen and ibuprofen?"

Take Action...

- Traumatic events and depression are connected to addiction. Work with your child's coach to keep athletes upbeat as they heal.
- Count the number of pain pills in your home and keep them secured.
- Drop off unused pills at a RX Drop-Off Location. Ask friends and family members to do the same.

Be on the lookout for:

- red, watery eyes, large or small pupils
- running nose or hacking cough
- cold, sweaty palms, shaky hands
- poor physical coordination
- puffy face or paleness
- changes in mood, grades and weight
- lack of energy for practices, games, school, and team activities

If you notice these signs, talk to your child's healthcare provider right away.

Did You Know:

Research shows that a 500mg tablet of acetaminophen (Tylenol) and one 200mg tablet of ibuprofen taken together up to 4 times per day with food and water is most effective for treating severe pain for most people.



1. Shah A, Hayes CJ, Martin BC. Characteristics of Initial Prescription Episodes and Likelihood of Long-Term Opioid Use – United States, 2006–2015. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2017;66:265–269.
2. NIDA. Heroin. National Institute on Drug Abuse website. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/heroin>. November 13, 2014. Accessed May 2, 2017.