

Opioid addiction: Getting help

Are you looking for help with opioid addiction?
Here's what you need to know.

You have options

Just as there is more than one pathway into addiction, there is more than one pathway out. Several treatment options are available, but it's important to ask a health care or service provider to help you. Talk to family and friends you can trust, and talk to people who have been there. Here are some treatment options that might work for you.

Tapering involves decreasing your use slowly, until you're able to quit.

- Don't try to taper alone. Plan the process with a service provider or doctor, and a support person.
- Tapering is not safe for pregnant women.

Controlled use involves taking medications the way they are prescribed.

- Talk to your health care provider, such as a doctor, nurse or pharmacist, before making any changes to your medications.
- Try using other strategies to manage your pain, like relaxation or physical activity.

Withdrawal management offers a place to quit in a supported setting.

- It may be available as a residential or a day/evening program.
- Some programs are free, while others charge a fee.

Narcotics Anonymous is a 12-step, abstinence-based self-help program.

Other addiction self-help options include self-help or SMART Recovery support groups.

Opioid replacement therapy replaces the opioid you are addicted to with a safer, longer-acting one.

- Options are methadone maintenance treatment (MMT) or Suboxone (buprenorphine and naloxone).



Is opioid replacement therapy right for you?

When combined with counselling and other social and community supports, opioid replacement therapy is the most effective treatment for opioid addiction. If opioids have become a problem and you want to stop using them, and the other options haven't worked for you, opioid replacement therapy might be right for you.

For more information about treatment options, contact ConnexOntario's Drug and Alcohol Helpline at 1 800 565-8603, or visit www.drugandalcoholhelpline.ca.

Remember . . .

Recovery from addiction often includes slips and relapses. Everyone's path to recovery is unique, and what works well for one person may not work for another. If one treatment option doesn't work for you, talk to your health care or service provider. Try again or try a different approach. Whatever you choose, get support. You don't have to do it alone.

Resources and links

Opioid Resource Hub: www.porticonetwork.ca/web/opioid-resource-hub/home

For more information about opioid replacement therapy, visit www.methadonesaveslives.ca and see the *Methadone Maintenance Treatment Client Handbook* (revised), available at www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health_information/a_z_mental_health_and_addiction_information/methadone/Documents/mmt_client_hndbk.pdf.

For links to many helpful resources about opioids, see the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Ontario's Narcotic Strategy home page: www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/drugs/ons/resources.aspx.



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