

Dorchester Goes Purple

Dorchester County Health Department Purple Thursdays



Did you know?

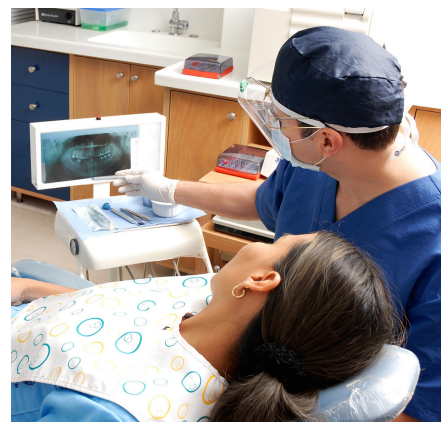
Every day, about 3,400 adults over 25 years of age misuse a prescription opioid for the first time.

Past misuse of prescription opioids is the strongest risk factor for starting heroin.

In 2018, there were 371 prescription opioid and 822 heroin deaths in Maryland.

Making decisions about treating pain is difficult, and opioids may be an appropriate choice for some. Discuss the risks and benefits with your healthcare provider. Share your medical history and if you or anyone in your family has a history of substance use or mental illness. You not only have the right to ask questions, but it is your responsibility to be informed. Ask your dentist, healthcare provider, or pharmacist the following:

- **What is the goal of this prescription?**
- **When and how should I take these?**
- **How long should I take these drugs?**
- **Are there any risks from this medication?**
- **What about non-opioid alternatives, such as acupuncture or over-the-counter pain relievers like ibuprofen?**



If using prescription opioids, it is critical to know why you are taking it, how it affects your body, and exactly how much and how often to take them. Beware of potential side effects, such as tolerance - meaning that over time you might need higher doses to relieve your pain, putting you at higher risk for overdose. Never take opioids in higher amounts or more often. Do not combine opioids with alcohol or other drugs, especially those that cause drowsiness.

In support of Dorchester Goes Purple, DCHD is participating in Purple Thursdays to raise awareness about the dangers of substance misuse, break the stigma of addiction, and encourage positive decision-making to get through life's challenges.