

“Detecting drug abuse early on is the most effective way of preventing an addiction from developing.”

To help identify whether someone is battling a painkiller abuse problem, there are several physical and behavioral warning signs to watch out for:

- The most common physical and behavioral signs of opiate abuse and addiction are:
- Needle marks on arms and legs from intravenous (injected) use
- Constricted, “pinpoint” pupils
- Having trouble staying awake, or falling asleep at inappropriate times
- Flushed, itchy skin
- Withdrawing from social activities that were once enjoyed
- Sudden and dramatic mood swings that seem out of character
- Impulsive actions and decision-making
- Engaging in risky activities, such as driving under the influence
- Visiting multiple doctors in order to obtain more prescriptions

Once a substance use disorder is identified, it’s vital to seek support as soon as possible. Some people are able to shed their abuse and addictive habits by talking to their doctor about adjusting their current prescription. Others may consider joining a 12-step program or meeting with a substance abuse counselor. However, those who have fallen victim to addiction will generally require intensive care at an inpatient rehab center.

Immediate Side Effects of Opiates

Short-term side effects of opioid painkillers depend on the type of drug, how much of the substance is taken and how it is administered. The effects of these drugs typically occur within 15 to 30 minutes and may last up to several hours.

The immediate side effects of painkiller use include:

- Relaxed state of mind and body
- Feelings of calmness
- Increased or false confidence
- Slowed and shallow breathing
- Impaired judgment
- Itchy, flushed skin
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Constipation
- Blurred vision
- Weight loss
- Hallucinations
- Euphoric mood
- Lightheadedness

This information was taken from www.addictioncenter.com/opiates/symptoms-signs