



# OPIATE WITHDRAWAL



## **Signs and Symptoms**

*Severity of opiate withdrawal varies depending on how high a dose you're on and how long you've been taking opiates. When withdrawal symptoms start and how long they last will depend on which opiate was being taken, because each opiate lasts different periods of time in the body.*

## **Sweating, Dilated Pupils, Runny Eyes, Sneezing/Runny Nose**



**Increased blood pressure and pulse**



**Goose Bumps, Muscle Aches and Pains, Insomnia**





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## What are opiates or narcotics?

The class of drugs known as opiates has been around for thousands of years and originally were made from opium poppies. Today opiates consist of man made or synthetic drugs as well as those from plants. Opiates include; opium, heroin, morphine, ms contin, codeine, codeine contin, Demerol, methadone, oxycodone, oxycontin, hydromorphone, Fentanyl patch, Tylenol #1, #2, #3, percocet, as well as others.

## What happens to opiates in the body?

Opiates can be taken by mouth, sniffed/snorted, smoked, injected or in the form of a continuous-release patch similar to a nicotine patch. There is usually a rapid high or “rush” as the person’s own natural opiate system is activated. Use of used (or “dirty”) needles exposes the person to the risk of hepatitis and HIV/AIDS or other infections. Because of the effects of opiates on the body in high doses, one of the risks of overdose is death. A high dose can cause deep coma, poor breathing, and death within minutes.

## What are the signs of tolerance?

Using opiates over a long period of time, whether prescribed or not, will lead to a level of ‘tolerance’, which means that more and more drug is required as time goes on to feel a ‘high’. Once the body has started to feel ‘normal’ with a certain dose of opiate on a daily basis, abruptly stopping the opiate would result in withdrawal symptoms.

## What are the symptoms of withdrawal?

The symptoms of withdrawal and the severity of it will depend on the amounts that were taken and the length of time the person was using opiates. Symptoms of withdrawal begin within 6-12 hours after reducing or stopping use of opiates. The most common symptoms include: sweating, muscle pains/aches/cramps, yawning, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, goose bumps or “cold turkey”, enlarged pupils, and decreased sleeping. These symptoms last about 3 to 14 days. Some people choose to “taper” (or gradually reduce) the dose of opiates with a doctor to an end goal that may be a lower dose of drug or drug-free.

## Methadone

Other people choose to be on methadone maintenance and it is usually necessary to attend a specialty clinic to do this because most doctors do not prescribe methadone. This means they still have an opiate in their blood stream, but have a more stable lifestyle because they are no longer using time, energy, and criminal activity to get opiates, and are often able to return to work.



<b>TRIGGERS</b>	<b>PLAN FOR TRIGGERS</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> WHEN YOU ARE ON HOLIDAYS	
<input type="checkbox"/> WHEN YOU FEEL IRRITABLE OR TIRED	
<input type="checkbox"/> ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS (CHRISTMAS, BIRTHDAYS)	
<input type="checkbox"/> FEEL LONELY OR BORED	
<input type="checkbox"/> FEEL PRESSURED BY LACK OF MONEY OR DEBT	
<input type="checkbox"/> WHEN YOU HAVE MONEY TO SPEND	
<input type="checkbox"/> FEEL AFRAID	
<input type="checkbox"/> FED UP WITH LIFE OR WHEN YOU FEEL DEPRESSED	
<input type="checkbox"/> START THINKING YOU ARE HOOKED ON ALCOHOL OR DRUGS	
<input type="checkbox"/> NOT FEELING UNDERSTOOD	
<input type="checkbox"/> UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS OF SELF OR OTHERS	
<input type="checkbox"/> NOT USING SUPPORT SYSTEMS (ISOLATION)	
<input type="checkbox"/> GOING AROUND FRIENDS OR PLACES	
<input type="checkbox"/> RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS	
<input type="checkbox"/> SELF-ESTEEM ISSUES	
<input type="checkbox"/> PROBLEMS AT WORK, SCHOOL OR HOME	
<input type="checkbox"/> WHEN YOU HAVE TO MEET NEW PEOPLE	