



Taking Action to Prevent Opioid Abuse and Misuse

- America has a drug problem that is touching the lives of all of its citizens.
- Opioids – prescription and illicit – are the main driver of drug overdose deaths. Opioids were involved in 42,249 deaths in 2016, and opioid overdose deaths were five times higher in 2016 than 1999. (ref: [CDC](#))
- In 2016, more than 11 million Americans misused prescription opioids. (Ref: [AAOA](#))
- Approximately 40 percent of people who misused opioids obtained them from a friend or relative for free. (Ref: AAOA, Ibid)
- Each day, more than 1,000 people are treated in emergency departments for not using opioid prescriptions as directed. (Ref: AAOA, Ibid)
- An average of one hundred fifteen Americans die every day from an opioid overdose. (Ref: AAOA, Ibid)
- Opioid prescribing in the U.S. hit its highest point in 2010 with providers writing more than 80 prescriptions per 100 patients. (Ref: [AAOA](#))
- Since 2010 the number of prescriptions has dropped more than 10%. (Ref: Ibid)
- Recent government data estimate that close to 92 million people (38 percent of the U.S. population) used prescription opioids in 2014–2015. (Ref: Ibid)
- A recent study found that more than two-thirds of patients who undergo surgery do not use all of their painkillers, and few safely store or dispose of these medications. (Ref: Ibid).
- The following drugs should also never be combined with opioids.
- Benzodiazepines (such as Xanax® and Valium®)
- Muscle relaxants (such as Soma® or Flexeril®)
- Hypnotics (such as Ambien® or Lunesta®)
- Other prescription opioids