

MEDICATION

Most treatment plans will include medication. The type of medication chosen depends on a number of factors, including the patient's different situations and the treatment setting.

- Methadone, buprenorphine and naltrexone are the most common medications used in the treatment of opioid addiction.
- Counseling is recommended with the use of each of these medications.
- Each medication works in a different way and has its own risks and benefits. These medications have a special way to be started, and once started, can be safely taken for years. The clinician and the patient should review together the risks and benefits of each medication.
- When used properly, these medications will NOT create a new addiction — rather they help patients manage addiction, so they can recover.
- If the first medication selected does not work well, the patient can discuss with the clinician to find the right medication for his/her needs.

***If someone is diagnosed with a moderate to severe opioid addiction, medication assisted treatment (MAT) should be seriously considered.

FIVE SIGNS OF QUALITY TREATMENT

***The Palm Beach County Medical Society recommends the need for a board-certified addiction psychiatrist or addiction medicine physician (with availability of a psychiatrist) to serve as a true Medical Director, overseeing every aspect of the care beginning with a comprehensive psychiatric and medical evaluation.

1. Accreditation
2. Medication
3. Evidence-Based Practices
4. Families
5. Supports

Visit the **SAMSHA** website at:

<https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Finding-Quality-Treatment-for-Substance-Use-Disorders/PEP18-TREATMENT-LOC>



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CLINICIAN

- ☐ What are the symptoms of opioid addiction?
- ☐ What type of treatments are available?
- ☐ What should I do if I think I have an addiction?
- ☐ How long do I need treatment?
- ☐ How long do I need to be on medication?
- ☐ Where can I find more information on treatment and recovery?
- ☐ Are opioid treatment medications addictive?
- ☐ Are there differences in costs for treatment medications?
- ☐ Does insurance cover the cost of treatment medications?
- ☐ Where will I be treated?

<http://eguideline.guidelinecentral.com/i/706017-asam-opioid-patient-piece/0?>

RESOURCES

For more information please visit the Palm Beach County Medical Society website — www.pbcms.org

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA)

US National Library of Medicine Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) that can assist with screening for co-occurring behavioral health disorders. Access: <https://www.samhsa.gov/sbirt>

Opioid Addiction Treatment



A Guide for Patients, Families and Friends



Palm Beach County
Medical Society Services



HEALTHCARE EMERGENCY
RESPONSE COALITION
of Palm Beach County



OPIOIDS

The Palm Beach County Medical Society (PBCMS) is extremely concerned about the impact that opioid addiction has on the community and subsequently has developed several resources to help educate physicians and patients to help them navigate the growing opioid epidemic. This brochure contains some of these resources while others can be accessed from www.pbcms.org — the PBCMS website. PBCMS also advocates on behalf of Palm Beach County physicians and patients to ensure that opioid-related legislation takes a common sense, patient-centered approach.

What are opioids?

Opioids (oh-pee-oyds) are powerful pain relievers your doctor can prescribe to manage acute and chronic pain. If you misuse opioids or do not take them correctly, they can cause overdose and even death.

How do opioids work?

Opioids block pain signals in the brain. Many opioids are available in short- and long-acting forms. Opioids change the chemistry of the brain and lead to drug tolerance, which means that over time the dose needs to be increased to achieve the same effect. Opioid addiction can cause life-threatening health problems, including the risk of overdose. Overdose occurs when high doses of opioids cause breathing to slow or stop, leading to unconsciousness and death if the overdose is not treated immediately. Both legal and illegal (ie. heroin, carfentanil) opioids carry a risk of overdose if a person takes too much of the drug, or if opioids are combined with other drugs (particularly tranquilizers called benzodiazepines).

DO'S AND DONT'S IN RESPONDING TO OPIOID OVERDOSE

- DO** Call for Help (Dial 911)
- DO** support the person's breathing by administering oxygen or performing rescue breathing.
- DO** administer naloxone (a drug that reverses the effect of opioids) as an injection or a nasal spray.
- DO** put the person in the "recovery position" on the side, if he or she is breathing independently.
- DO** stay with the person and keep him/her warm.
- DON'T** slap or try to forcefully stimulate the person — it will only cause further injury.
- DON'T** put the person into a cold bath or shower. This increases the risk of falling, drowning or going into shock.
- DON'T** inject the person with any substance (salt water, milk, "speed," heroin, etc.). The only safe and appropriate treatment is naloxone.
- DON'T** try to make the person vomit drugs that he or she may have swallowed. Choking or inhaling vomit into the lungs can cause death.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR ADULT FRIEND OR LOVED ONE HAS A PROBLEM WITH DRUGS

- How do I know if my adult friend or loved one has a substance abuse problem?
- If my friend or loved one asks for my help, where do I start?
- My friend has considered treatment but is afraid of what others will think. What can I tell my friend?
- If my friend or loved one refuses to cooperate, should we conduct an intervention?
- Can I explore treatment centers even if my friend is not willing to go into treatment?
- What should I look for in a treatment center?

To find answers to these questions and many more, please visit the National Institute on Drug Abuse at:
<https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/treatment/what-to-do-if-your-adult-friend-or-loved-one-has-problem-drugs>

SEEKING HELP

Seeking help is the first important step to recovery. The next step in the process is to meet with a qualified clinician. Throughout the assessment, treatment and recovery process, the patient may interface with various provider types including a physician, nurse, case manager, mental health counselor and many more. For a list of provider types who may be associated with treatment please visit www.pbcms.org.

TREATMENT OVERVIEW

After the assessment, the clinician will discuss all recommended treatment options with the patient. Every patient situation is different, so choosing the best options is a shared decision between the patient and the clinician.

Treatment Plan After discussing the assessment and treatment choices with the clinician, including the ASAM Level of Care, it's time to finish the treatment plan. It is common for both the patient and clinician to sign an agreement about what to expect during treatment. This can include treatment goals, which medications are used, treatment schedule, and counseling plan.

Patient Participation Participation in treatment and recovery is shown to improve outcomes. Treatment will be ongoing, as addiction is a chronic disease. For this reason, an agreed upon treatment plan ahead of time is strongly recommended.

Counseling An important part of treatment, counseling is usually required with all medications. Counseling helps patients address personal, social or other problems that may contribute to their addiction.

Support Encouragement and support from family and friends play a key role. The family should try to learn as much as possible about addiction to improve the chances of a long-lasting recovery.

