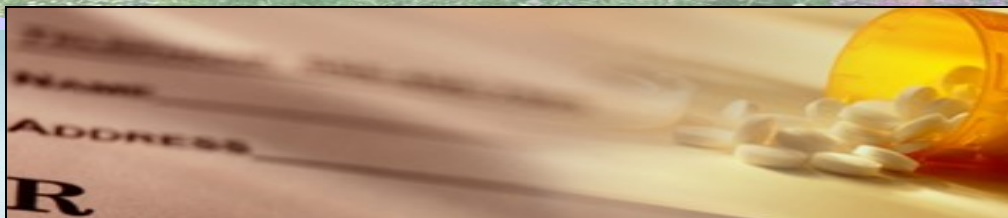




Drug Demand Reduction Quarterly Newsletter



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**Drug Demand
Reduction Program
481-5998
Located in the 97th
MDG**

Program Manager
Mr. Chris Baumgardner

Did You Know? Prescription Drugs:

Prescription painkillers (drugs like oxycodone, hydrocodone and methadone) killed nearly 15,000 people—one person every forty minutes. These were husbands and sons, mothers and daughters. And the problem has never been worse. For every person who died of a prescription painkiller overdose in 1999, nearly four died in 2008. We are in the midst of an epidemic.

Overdose deaths involving prescription opioids have quadrupled since 1999, and so have sales of these prescription drugs. From 1999 to 2015, more than 183,000 people have died in the U.S. from overdoses related to prescription opioids

Astonishingly, in 2010 enough painkillers were prescribed to medicate every American adult around-the-clock for a month.

Make no mistake: these drugs, when appropriately used and prescribed, can play an important role in improving the quality of life for carefully

selected patients. But there are things that everyone can do to make sure these drugs are used safely and responsibly.

Individuals can also make an impact. More than half of all people who misuse prescription painkillers report getting their drugs from a family member or friend. Individuals must make sure to use prescription painkillers only as directed and to never share them with others. People should also take care to store their prescriptions safely, dispose of them properly and get help if they have substance abuse problems.

The lives impacted by painkiller abuse and overdose can be found everywhere—a father who becomes addicted to painkillers after a work injury and overdoses, a teenager who takes an old bottle of painkillers from a relative's medicine cabinet or a mother who loses a son to painkillers only to find her other child is also addicted. For more information on prescription drug overdoses, visit www.cdc.gov/injury.



A Public Health Epidemic

In 2014, almost 2 million Americans abused or were dependent on prescription opioids.

Men were more likely to die from overdose, but the mortality gap between men and women is closing

Certain groups are more likely to abuse or overdose on prescription painkillers: Many more men than women die of overdoses from prescription painkillers. Middle-aged adults have the highest prescription painkiller overdose rates. People in rural counties are about two times as likely to overdose on prescription painkillers

Steps for Safety

Individuals can:

- Use prescription painkillers only as directed by a health care provider.
- Make sure they are the only one to use their prescription painkillers. Not selling or sharing them with others helps prevent misuse and abuse.
- Store prescription painkillers in a secure place and dispose of them properly.*

Get help for substance abuse problems if needed (1-800-662-HELP).

The Federal Government is::

- Tracking prescription drug overdose trends to better understand the epidemic.
- Working with stakeholder organizations to educate health care providers and the public about prescription drug abuse and overdose.

Evaluating and promoting programs and policies shown to prevent prescription drug overdose, while making sure patients have access to safe, effective pain treatment.

Number of Prescription Painkiller Deaths More Than Tripled in Last 10 Years



The CDC said painkiller abuse and deaths are rising because the drugs are easier than ever to obtain. They cited the growth of “pill mills,” clinics that prescribe opioids without first conducting medical exams, and “doctor shopping,” or receiving multiple prescriptions from different doctors.

“Right now, the system is awash in opioids—dangerous drugs that got people hooked and keep them hooked,” said CDC Director Thomas Frieden.

“Prescription drug abuse is a silent epidemic that is stealing thousands of lives and tearing apart communities and families across America,” Gil Kerlikowske, Director of National Drug Control Policy, said in a [CDC news release](#). He noted health care providers and patients should be educated on the risks of prescription painkillers. “Parents and grandparents should properly dispose of any unneeded or expired medications from the home and to talk to their kids about the misuse and abuse of prescription drugs,” he noted.

How Oklahoma ranks in painkiller abuse

Deaths from drug overdoses, particularly prescription painkillers, increased significantly over a decade. In 2008, 36,450 people died of drug overdoses—a national rate of nearly 12 per 100,000 people.

Fatal Drug Overdoses: States with the highest rate of fatal overdoses per 100,000 people: 1—New Mexico, ; 2—West Virginia; 3—Nevade; 4—Utah; 5—Alaska; 6—Kentucky; 7—Rhode Island; 8—Florida; 9—Oklahoma; 10—Ohio,

Painkiller Abuse: States with the highest painkiller abuse rates: 1—Oklahoma, 8.1%; 2—Oregon,, 6.8% 3—Washington,, 6.1% 3—Arizona, 6.1%; 4—Arizona, 6%; 4—Kentucky, 6%; 5—West Virginia, 5.9%; 5— Nevada, 5.9%; 5—New Hampshire, 5.9%; 6—Idaho, 5.8%