

STUDENT ATHLETES



Dear Parent/ Guardian and Athletes,

This information sheet is provided to assist you and your child in recognizing the risk of prescription opioid use and misuse in student athletes. Ohio is amid an opioid epidemic, with accidental overdoses claiming the lives of **4,050 Ohioans** in 2016. 2 million U.S. high school athletes suffer a sports related injury annually, putting **athletes at risk for using and misusing prescription opioids**. Since pain is expected in most sports, how do we help our athletes avoid this dangerous behaviour? It is imperative to educate athletes, parents and coaches on the risks of prescription opioid use, address the culture of playing through pain, and enable our athletes to recover and return to play without treatment leading to addiction.

WHAT ARE PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS?

Opioids are powerful prescription narcotic medications used to treat pain which include Vicodin, OxyContin, Oxycodone, Percocet, Fentanyl, and codeine. These drugs may lead to dependence, tolerance, accidental overdose, and death when misused, or taken long term.

- 20% of students use a prescription opiate before 18
- 80% of new heroin users start by misusing painkillers

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS INJURED?

- Trial non-narcotic forms of pain management as first line treatment, NSAIDS and acetaminophen are often adequate
- Physical therapy, massage, chiropractor
- Non-medical adjuncts such as heat, ice, stretching
- Enforce **proper recovery time, do not encourage to play through injury**

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD IF THEY ARE PRESCRIBED OPIOIDS

- Discuss with healthcare provider about alternative pain management treatment
- Ensure new prescribing rules are followed
- Sign a 'Start Talking' consent form with provider <http://starttalking.ohio.gov/Portals/0/assets/TakeAction/Community/Start-Talking-Model-Consent-Form.pdf>
- Take only for acute pain, only as prescribed, and switch to non-opioid alternative as soon as possible
- Ensure they do not share medication
- Limit access to the medication, give under supervision
- Safely dispose of any unused medication through prescription drug drop box, take back day, or medication disposal pouch
- Monitor for the signs of drug misuse, and consider their social and emotional health when injured.

HOW TO GET FURTHER INFORMATION

1 in 4 teens have taken a prescription medication that was not prescribed to them, and 70% get the medication from family or friends. Children are 50% less likely to use drugs when parents or other trusted adults talk with them about the risks. To further your knowledge to speak openly to your athlete, visit the following resources.



- Sign up for **KNOW! Parent Tips** from Start Talking Ohio <http://starttalking.ohio.gov/Prevention/KNOW.aspx>
- Use the **Parent360RX Action Tool Kit** <http://starttalking.ohio.gov/Prevention/PARENTS360Rx.aspx>
- Schedule a **5-mins for Life presentation for your team** <http://starttalking.ohio.gov/Prevention/5MinutesforLife.aspx>



- Explore the educational modules or schedule a presentation for your team. <https://www.generationrx.org/>
- Learn how to **keep medications secure**.
- **Know how and where to dispose of medication safely.** Use www.rxdrugdropbox.org to find the drop box nearest you. Pick up a free medication disposal pouch at any Good Will Easter Seals location in Montgomery County.

IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A PROBLEM

If you suspect your child is using drugs or alcohol, get help. By intervening early, you can save them from the health and impairment consequences of substance use and potential addiction.

- **Contact Samaritan CrisisCare at 937-224-4646 for help**