

"A DOCTOR
PRESCRIBED
THEM. SO
THEY MUST
BE SAFER,
RIGHT?"

You have a drug problem when:

- You start blowing off responsibilities at work, school, or home.
- You take risks while high.
- Your drug use is causing relationship or legal problems.
- You need more of a drug for the same effect.
- You take drugs to relieve withdrawal symptoms.
- You quit participating in activities you once enjoyed.
- Your life revolves around drug use.

If this sounds like you or a loved one, please visit or call Your Life Iowa to find reliable information, get treatment options, and find help near you.

We're your everyday life support.
YourLifelowa.org
1.855.581.8111

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS ARE STILL DRUGS.



IOWA
DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC
HEALTH



4/2021



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Doctors examine you before prescribing a drug. That way they can see if your body can handle the drug, dosage, and the serious side effects. So unless you're taking a drug a doctor prescribed just for you, you have no way of knowing if the prescription is safe for you.

"ARE THERE ANY EFFECTS TO MY BODY I SHOULD WORRY ABOUT?"

Some prescription drugs will make your heart beat super fast, maybe to the point of causing a heart attack. Others will slow your breathing down, maybe to the point where you stop breathing completely. **Some will numb the pain, maybe to the point of overdose.** If you take some medications for too long, stopping may cause withdrawal symptoms — like mood swings, anger, sleep problems, and depression.

"NEXT YOU'LL TRY TO SCARE ME BY SAYING OXY LEADS TO HEROIN."

Words may not scare you, but the numbers should. **Four out of five new heroin users started with prescription drugs like oxycodone (also called oxy).*** Opioids like oxy are used to reduce pain; but over time, you need more and more to get the same effect. (Along with effects you don't want, like being sick to your stomach, constipated, and paranoid.) Before you know it, you're addicted. By then, it's so expensive you either have to quit and go through withdrawal, or look for a cheaper high — heroin.

"I DON'T LIVE IN SOME HARDCORE BIG CITY. THIS IS IOWA."

Overdoses kill more people than car accidents — and not just in big cities. It happens in small towns. It happens to young people and old people. Rich and poor. It's happening here. And it's happening to people just like you. Young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 have the highest abuse rate of any age group for the non-medical use of prescription drugs* and 12- to 17-year-olds aren't far behind. Get smart about prescription drugs. And treat them like drugs because, well, that's what they are.

Taking someone else's pills is a prescription for trouble.

*National Institute on Drug Abuse

