Know More. Do More.

Understanding Substance Misuse in Teens

Participating in sports is good for a student athlete's health and self-esteem, yet it also comes with the risk of painful injury that sometimes requires surgery and treatment with opioid pain medicines.

When this is the case, they need others on their team to help them get well and keep them that way — including their parents, doctor, athletic trainer and coaches.

Dublin ACT Coalition

Nationwide Children's

This information was made possible by the Dublin ACT Coalition in partnership with Nationwide Children's Hospital.

Join us in protecting our student athletes from dangerous opioid pain meds.

When student athletes are prescribed opioid pain medicine for an injury or after surgery — sports-related or not — they need others on their team to help them get well and keep them that way.

For this reason, Nationwide Children's Hospital, in partnership with the Dublin ACT Coalition, has developed a toolkit for parents, athletic trainers and coaches which is designed to:

- Underscore the safe use of opioids and other prescription medicines
- Educate about the risk factors that increase teen risk for addiction and how to know signs of misuse
- Provide a clear and consistent no-use message regarding alcohol and other drugs and the misuse of prescription medicines
- Empower everyone in your sphere of influence to say something when they see something to save a life

On and off the field or court, athletes need to be 100% to be successful, achieve their dreams and thrive not just athletically but also academically, psychologically and socially. **We all need to be involved to make this happen.**

WHEN A CHILD OR TEEN HAS BEEN PRESCRIBED OPIOIDS:

MONITOR
Only allow your child to take medicines as prescribed. No one else should take this medicine.

SECURE
Keep your child's medicine in a locked cabinet or lock box AND out of the reach of children.

TRANSITION
Get your child off an opioid medicine as soon as you can.

DISPOSE
Medicine should be disposed of responsibly when it is no longer needed.

KNOW THE SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE

Personal appearance changes, such as:

- Messy, careless appearance and poor hygiene
- Red, flushed cheeks or face not brought on by athletic activity
- Heavy sweating not brought on by athletic activity
- Fatigue not brought on by athletic activity
- Itchy skin
- Rapid weight loss not brought on by athletic activity

Behavioral changes, such as:

- Decreased motivation
- Hostility or anger
- Unusually clumsy, lack of coordination
- Slurred speech
- Loud or obnoxious behavior
- Being deceitful or secretive

Changes in routine, such as:

- New friends and/or being secretive about them
- Lying about new interests and activities
- Loss of interest in school or things they once cared about
- Money/valuables missing from home
- Demand for more privacy, locked doors, eye contact avoidance
- Skipping school

Know More. Do More.

Understanding Substance Misuse in Teens

PARENTS

STUDENT ATHLETES AND OPIOID SAFETY

ADDICTION can be an unintended consequence of misusing powerful medicines.

100% ON AND OFF THE FIELD

If your child has been injured or had surgery, the doctor may prescribe a powerful opioid medicine like Percocet®, OxyContin® or Vicodin®. While these can be helpful, **misuse can lead to changes in a child's brain that can last forever, can create lifelong addiction pathways, and can result in death.**

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD'S DOCTOR

By understanding opioid pain medicines and being aware of the risks, your child will heal faster. Here are 5 key questions for your child's doctor:

- ? Are there ways to control pain instead of using prescribed meds, such as ibuprofen (Motrin®, etc.) and acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ice?
- ? Does my child have to take the pain meds?
- ? How long should I expect my child to need the pain meds?
- ? What are the risk factors I need to be aware of?
- ? What are the side effects I need to know about?

! MAKE SURE TO SHARE ADDICTION RISK FACTORS WITH YOUR DOCTOR

- FAMILY HISTORY
- MENTAL HEALTH ISSSUES
- SEXUAL ABUSE
- ADDICTION
- PHYSICAL ABUSE
- PRESENCE OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS IN THE HOME

Dublin ACT Coalition

Nationwide Children's

This information was made possible by the Dublin ACT Coalition in partnership with Nationwide Children's Hospital.

DOs and DON'Ts if your child has been prescribed opioids

DOs

DO find out if an opioid is needed. Talk openly with your child's doctor about the need for prescription pain medicine.

DO think about your family's history of addiction. If you, your child or anyone else in your family has had problems with prescription drugs, alcohol or any other substances, tell the doctor.

DO help your child lessen the side effects of pain meds. Taking pain meds with food may help with nausea. Monitor your child for constipation.

DO keep medicine locked up at home. If the athlete needs to take any medication during the school day, the school (by law) must approve its use.

DO remember other things for pain. Your child's pain plan should include non-medicine options such as ice, compression, elevation and rest as part of the treatment plan.

DO watch out for "seekers." Be on the lookout for siblings, relatives, friends, neighbors or strangers who are looking to steal opioid medicines or simply try them out of "curiosity."

DO keep in mind the unintended consequences of misusing prescription medicines. Misuse or addiction can lead to driving while under the influence or unprotected sex.

DON'Ts

DON'T let your child take too many or too often. Do not let your child take more pills than prescribed or more often than prescribed.

DON'T let your child self-administer. Keep control of the medicine bottle in a locked box or cabinet. Watch your child when he or she is taking the medicine. Regularly track the level of medicine in the bottle.

DON'T allow your child to take pain meds if their pain is unbearable. Fairly quickly, your child's pain should become easier to bear until it has gone away.

DON'T take pain meds for longer than 5 days. If your child has been taking opioid pain meds steadily for 5 days or more, you may need to wean your child off the meds to prevent withdrawal symptoms. Often, children only need a few doses of pain meds if pain can be controlled with over-the-counter meds and other non-medicine treatments, such as ice.

DON'T mix opioid pain meds with alcohol or other substances. Mixing powerful opioid pain meds can be dangerous and even deadly.

DON'T share pain meds. Do not let your child share his or her prescription medicine with a friend or teammate. It is dangerous if your child takes someone else's prescribed medicine, and it is against federal and state laws, as well as many school policies.

WHEN A TEEN HAS BEEN PRESCRIBED OPIOIDS:

MONITOR Only allow your child to take medicines as prescribed.

SECURE Keep your child's medicine in a locked cabinet or lock box AND out of the reach of children.

TRANSITION Move your child off an opioid medicine as soon as you can.

DISPOSE Medicine should be disposed of responsibly when it is no longer needed.

Ohio rules for prescribing

Ohio issued new rules for prescribing opioid pain relievers for treatment of severe pain. Typically, no more than 5 days for children under age 18 and only with written consent by a parent or guardian.

Dublin ACT Coalition
Nationwide Children's

This information was made possible by the Dublin ACT Coalition in partnership with Nationwide Children's Hospital.