

Opioid Use Disorder: Facts & Treatment



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Facts

- Pregnant and postpartum people can develop opioid use disorder with any opioid, even those prescribed for pain. In fact, the number of pregnant women with opioid use disorder has more than quadrupled over the past 20 years.
- You are at risk of opioid use disorder if you take prescription opioid medications (such as hydrocodone, oxycodone, morphine, fentanyl, codeine, tramadol, or hydromorphone) or if you use heroin or fentanyl.
- Opioids are not usually a safe or effective therapy for the long-term management of pain. They can also lead to NOWS, or neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome, where a new baby goes through opioid withdrawal after birth.
- Opioid use disorder develops over time and is not a choice or weakness; it's a brain **disease that needs treatment**, just like other diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure.
- Signs of opioid use disorder include:
 - Cravings
 - Difficulty with work, relationships, and activities
 - Trouble controlling substance use, **even when it causes harm**
- People with opioid use disorder can **recover and live meaningful, productive lives**.
- There are multiple **medication choices that can treat opioid use disorder** and are safe for mom and baby, even if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Talking to Your Clinician

- Ask your clinician if there are safer ways to manage your pain.
- Your clinician should **regularly screen you for opioid use disorder**; this is a normal and expected part of your health care plan that keeps you and your unborn or new baby safe and healthy.
- If you think you might be dependent on your opioid medication or have opioid use disorder, ask your clinician about **treatment options**.
- **Pregnant and postpartum people are prioritized when accessing treatment!**
- Opioid use disorder is a disease—don't feel guilty or ashamed to ask for help!