

# RISK FACTORS FOR OPIOID MISUSE, ADDICTION, AND OVERDOSE

Prescription opioids such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, morphine, and fentanyl, among others, are powerful medications that have pain-reducing benefits but also may lead to misuse, addiction, overdose, and even death.

Various factors will increase an individual's risk of misuse, addiction, or overdose while taking opioids. **These risk factors include:**

## OPIOID DOSE, DURATION AND FORMULATIONS

- 1 HIGH DOSE.** The higher the opioid dose, the higher the risk for misuse and overdose death. Higher doses, >100 morphine milligram equivalents (MME), have over two times the risk relative to lower doses. Even low doses (such as 20-50 MME) can present a risk.
- 2 PROLONGED DURATION.** Prolonged use is associated with significant risk of addiction. Physical dependence and addiction to opioids may occur in as little as a few days. As many as one in four people receiving prescription opioids long term in a primary care setting struggles with opioid addiction.
- 3 EXTENDED-RELEASE AND LONG-ACTING FORMULATIONS.** There are greater risks of overdose and death associated with extended-release and long-acting opioid formulations versus immediate release formulations.

Naloxone is available over the counter, and some insurance will cover it.

