



Dear Friend,

Heroin and opioid addiction has claimed the lives of too many young adults in our communities. As a member of the State Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction since 2014, I have worked to end this epidemic by passing new laws to improve education, increase enforcement and expand insurance coverages.

This brochure contains background information about heroin along with resources to help families and individuals who are suffering from the consequences of addiction.

It is my hope that with our combined efforts, we can save lives and bring an end to the rise of heroin and opioid addiction.

Sincerely,

MAJOR PROGRESS IN THE BATTLE AGAINST ADDICTION NEW YORK STATE SENATE LEGISLATIVE ACTION

- Investing hundreds of millions of dollars in state funding to strengthen prevention, treatment, and recovery services;
- Expanding insurance coverage for addiction treatment;
- Enhancing treatment options;
- Empowering professionals to administer emergency assistance to individuals;
- Enhancing data collection and reporting on heroin and opioid overdoses;
- Requiring hospitals to educate individuals about available treatment services;
- Requiring prescriber education; and
- Providing insurance coverage for necessary inpatient services for the diagnosis and treatment of substance use disorder.

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM SENATOR KEN LAVALLE

HEROIN RESOURCES AND HOW TO COMBAT ADDICTION

HEROIN- DRUG FACTS

Heroin is an opioid drug that is synthesized from morphine, a naturally occurring substance extracted from the seed pod of the Asian opium poppy plant. Heroin usually appears as a white or brown powder or as a black sticky substance known as “black tar heroin.”

Heroin can be injected, inhaled by snorting or sniffing or smoked. Any of these routes of administration deliver the drug to the brain very rapidly, which contributes to its health risks and to its high risk for addiction.

Addiction is defined as a chronic relapsing disease caused by changes in the brain and characterized by uncontrollable drug-seeking, no matter the consequences.

Long-term effects of opioid addiction on the brain include:

Tolerance – more of the drug is needed to achieve the same intensity of effect.

Dependence – the need to continue use of the drug to avoid withdrawal symptoms.

Heroin is associated with a number of serious health conditions, including death by overdose and infectious diseases, such as HIV and Hepatitis. Chronic users can suffer from liver and kidney disease, collapsed veins, infections in the heart lining and valves, and permanent damage to vital organs.

KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

Substance abuse disorder is a progressive disease. Young people may start with alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, but their use progresses until it is out of control. A key risk factor is the use of prescription pain killers.

PHYSICAL SIGNS

- Small pupils
- Decreased respiratory rate
- Non-responsive state - drowsiness
- Loss or increase in appetite or unexplained weight loss or gain
- Intense flu-like symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, sweating, shaking of feet or head, large pupils
- Stealing
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts out of season

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS

- Change in attitude / personality
- Avoiding contact with family
- Change in friends / new hangouts
- Change in activities, hobbies or sports
- Drop in grades or work performance
- Isolation and secretive behavior
- Moodiness, irritability, nervousness, or giddiness
- Stealing
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts out of season

ADVANCED WARNING SIGNS

- Missing medications
- Burned or missing spoons or bottle caps
- Syringes
- Small bags with powder residue
- Missing shoelaces/belts

FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION: KITCHEN TOOLKIT / RECOGNIZE WARNING SIGNS / KEYS TO PREVENTION: [WWW.COMBATHEROIN.NY.GOV](http://www.combatheroin.ny.gov)

HOW TO STOP THE ABUSE

First, talk to the person and keep an open line of communication. When a person is addicted to a substance, they will likely want to stop using but cannot and do not know how to stop the drug abuse. Let them know that substance abuse is a medical disorder and there is help available, such as treatment programs and medicated assisted treatment. Three medications have been approved by the FDA for the treatment of opiate dependence – buprenorphine, methadone and naltrexone.

(SOURCE: [HTTP://WWW.WHITEHOUSE.GOV/SITES/DEFAULT/FILES/ONDCP/RECOVERY/MEDICATION_ASSISTED_TREATMENT_9-21-2012.1.PDF](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ondcp/recovery/medication_assisted_treatment_9-21-2012.1.pdf))

RESOURCES:

**NEW YORK STATE COMBAT HEROIN
& PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE**
www.combatheroin.ny.gov
1-877-8-HOPENY (877-846-7369)

**NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF ALCOHOLISM
AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES**
[http://www.oasas.ny.gov/
accesshelp/](http://www.oasas.ny.gov/accesshelp/)

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS
<http://www.na.org/>

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE
<http://www.drugabuse.gov/>

NAR-ANON FAMILY GROUPS
<http://www.nar-anon.org/>
800-477-6291 (toll free)

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
[http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/
general/opioid_overdose_prevention/](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/opioid_overdose_prevention/)

(SOURCE: WWW.DRUGABUSE.GOV)

