

STUDENT ATHLETES

Dear Parent / Guardian and Athletes,

This information is to assist you in recognizing the risk of prescription opioid use and misuse in student athletes. Since pain is expected in most sports, how do we help our athletes avoid this dangerous behavior? It is imperative that athletes, parents, and coaches get educated about the risks of prescription opioid use, address the culture of playing through pain, and enable our athletes to recover and return to play without treatment leading to addiction.

WHAT ARE PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS?

Opioids are powerful prescription narcotic medications used to treat pain which include Vicodin, OxyContin, Oxycodone, Percocet, Fentanyl, codeine, and others. These drugs may lead to dependence, tolerance, accidental overdose, and death when misused, or taken long term.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS INJURED

- Try non-narcotic forms of pain management as the first line treatment. NSAIDS, and acetaminophen are often adequate.
- Consider physical therapy, massage, chiropractor
- Try non-medical alternatives such as heat, ice, and stretching.
- Enforce **proper recovery time. Do not encourage the athlete to play through injury.**

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD IF THEY ARE PRESCRIBED OPIOIDS

- Discuss with your healthcare provider about alternative pain management treatment.
- Ensure prescribing rules are followed.
- Sign a 'Start Talking' consent form with provider <http://starttalking.ohio.gov/portals/0/Documents/Medical/Start-Talking-Model-Consent-Form.pdf>
- Take only for acute pain, only as prescribed, and switch to a non-opioid alternative as soon as possible.
- Ensure they do not share medications with others
- Limit access to the medication. Give only under supervision.
- Safely dispose of any unused medications through prescription drug drop box, take back day, or medication disposal pouch.
- Monitor for signs of drug misuse, and consider social and emotional health when injured.

HOW TO GET MORE INFORMATION

To further your knowledge about how to speak openly to your athlete, visit the following resources.



- Sign up for **KNOW! Parent Tips** from Start Talking Ohio: <http://starttalking.ohio.gov/Schools/Know>
- Use the **Parent360RX Action Tool Kit**: <http://starttalking.ohio.gov/Schools/Parents360-Rx>
- Schedule a **Youth Mental Health First Aid training for your team** by calling 937-443-0416 or go to: www.mcadamhs.org/trainings_and_events
- Learn **safe medication practices and how to keep medications secure**: <https://www.generationrx.org/> Explore the educational modules or schedule a presentation for your team. Contact Gail Dafler, G.Dafler@gesmv.org, 937-684-0316



- **Know how and where to dispose of medication safely.** Use www.rxdropbox.org to find the drop box nearest you. Pick up a free medication disposal bag at Goodwill Easter Seals locations in Montgomery County.



If you suspect your child is using drugs or alcohol, get help. By intervening early, you can save them from the long term consequences of substance abuse and potential addiction.

- **Contact Samaritan CrisisCare at 937-224-4646**