

Key Opioid Statistics (Massachusetts and US)

- More than **27 million** Americans suffer from substance use disorders (SUD)*.
- Across the country, **2.1 million** people suffer from substance use disorders related to prescription opioids, causing **80** deaths daily.
- In 2014, fatal overdoses in Massachusetts were more than **2X** the national average .**
- Estimated **1,979** Massachusetts deaths in 2016 were attributable to a fatal dose of heroin or a prescription opioid – nearly **5** people per day statewide. **
- **Two out of every three** of these deaths were people under the age of 45 years old.
- **One in six** Massachusetts residents received an opioid prescription in 2015 **
- Only **36%** of Massachusetts residents report being warned about the risks of addiction when being prescribed opioids.*
- Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the US. In 2014, 40% of those deaths were related to prescription opioids and 22% were related to heroin.
- 80% of new heroin users started out misusing prescription painkillers.
- More than 50% of people who misuse prescription painkillers got them for free (or took them without asking) from a friend or relative who had a prescription. 22% got them from their doctor.
- Abusing prescription opioid painkillers, like oxycontin and vicodin, may lead to heroin use. It is cheaper, easier to obtain, and produces a similar high.
- Today, 580 people will try heroin for the first time.
- Since 2010, heroin deaths have increased by 248%.
- 13.9% of high school seniors used a prescription drug non-medically in the past year.
- 75.6% of American high school students have used one or more addictive substances (cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, and/or cocaine). Controlled prescription drugs are the fourth most commonly misused type of addictive substance among teens in the US (behind alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana).
- Use of any drug can increase a young person's vulnerability to addiction to other substances of abuse later in life by altering brain chemistry and increasing social interactions with other individuals who use addictive substances. Easily accessible drugs (e.g., marijuana, alcohol, nicotine, prescription medications) are frequently used before progression to other, more harmful substances. The majority of individuals who have a substance use disorder started using before age 18 and developed their disorder by age 20. Delaying the start of drug use greatly reduces the risk of becoming addicted.

* *Per the 2016 Surgeon General's Report: Facing Addiction in America*

***Per the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#)*