

Opioid Use Disorder is a condition characterized by problematic opioid use that causes significant distress or impairment.

Opioid Use Disorder can range in severity from mild to severe.

The disorder is characterised by:

- Using opioids in larger amounts or for longer than intended
- Unsuccessful attempts to cut down or control use
- Spending excessive time obtaining and using opioids
- Experiencing strong cravings
- Continued use despite negative consequences such as neglecting responsibilities, social problems, etc
- Tolerance and withdrawal symptoms

One should always seek professional help for a comprehensive evaluation and appropriate support.



Supporting A Loved One with Opioid Use Disorder

Learn to spot the signs of addiction:

- Reduced social interaction
- Poor memory or concentration
- Anxiety
- Slow movement and reactions
- Mood swings
- Depression

Observe and Share Your Observations:

Observe the individual's behavior consistently for a span of days or weeks and make detailed records of your observations. Engage in discussions with supportive family members and consider consulting an addiction specialist to gain additional insights into the situation and establish a plan.

Have a Conversation with Your Loved One Affected by Opioid Use Disorder:

Express your concerns while actively seeking to understand the other person's perspective on the situation. Here are some additional suggestions to ensure a productive conversation:

- Ensure they are not under the influence of substances
- Begin the conversation by expressing your genuine care and concern for the person
- Present the observed facts of the situation and convey your worries
- Use open-ended questions to encourage the person to share their viewpoint and feelings



OPIOID USE DISORDER FAMILY & FRIENDS





Stop Stigma
#itstartswithyou

Stigma Reduction

- Educate yourself about addiction to challenge stigmatizing beliefs
- Share accurate information with those around you and others
- Speak openly about addiction and encourage empathy and compassion
- Support local initiatives or organizations that aim to reduce stigma and promote understanding

How can I prepare for a potential overdose?

- Visit <https://learn.redcross.ca> to learn more on how to prepare for an opioid emergency and receive a free naloxone kit
- Ensure you have a naloxone kit always
- Familiarize yourself with signs of an overdosed person such as:
 - Being unresponsive
 - Shallow, or stopped breathing
 - Pale skin
 - Dilated pupils
 - Nose/lips turned blue

If signs are present, administer naloxone and call 911, the medication may take up to five minutes to work and may need to be re-applied if there is no change.

Self-Care

Self-care is crucial when supporting someone with an opioid use disorder.

- Seek support from friends, family, or support groups
- Take time to do things you enjoy
- Be patient and kind to yourself
- Allow yourself to feel your emotions
- Talk it out with a loved one and or a counsellor
- Remember that it is a journey and take it one day at a time
- Remember that you're not alone, seek help when it gets overwhelming and take breaks

Additionally, consider accessing further help through counseling or therapy services.

- **MMF Mental Wellness Support Line**
1.833.390.1041 EXT 1
- **Manitoba Addictions Helpline**
1-855-662-6605
- **Youth Addictions Centralized Information**
1-877-710-3999
- **For 24-hour assistance, Klinik Crisis Line**
204-786-8686
Toll free: 1-888-322-3019
TTY: 204-784-4097
- **Addictions Foundation Manitoba**
204-944-6200 · Toll free: 1.866.638.2561