



## Opioid Addiction and Its Impact on Daily Functioning

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### DESCRIPTION

Opioid addiction is a serious condition that affects millions of people worldwide. This class of drugs, which includes prescription painkillers such as oxycodone and hydrocodone, as well as illegal substances like heroin, produces strong pain relief and feelings of euphoria. While opioids can be effective for managing acute or chronic pain, prolonged or non-medical use can result in physical dependency, psychological challenges and severe disruption to daily functioning. Understanding these consequences provides a clearer picture of how addiction influences life on multiple levels and highlights the need for comprehensive intervention strategies. The initial phase of opioid use often begins with legitimate medical treatment. Patients prescribed opioids for post-surgical pain, injury or chronic conditions may develop tolerance over time. Tolerance occurs when the body requires higher doses to achieve the same effect, which increases the risk of dependency. Individuals may also begin to use opioids outside prescribed limits, either to manage pain more effectively or to experience the euphoric effects. Over time, the body adjusts to the presence of the drug and discontinuation triggers withdrawal symptoms. Withdrawal can include intense cravings, muscle pain, gastrointestinal distress, insomnia, irritability and emotional instability, all of which interfere with normal daily routines.

Psychological effects are significant and often under recognized. Chronic opioid use alters brain chemistry, impacting mood, cognition and behavior. Individuals may experience heightened anxiety, depression and reduced motivation, which can make performing everyday tasks challenging. Attention, memory and decision-making capabilities are often impaired, complicating responsibilities at work, school or home. Emotional regulation may decline, causing mood swings or irritability, which can strain

relationships and further isolate individuals from support networks. Social functioning is frequently disrupted. Opioid addiction can strain family dynamics, friendships and professional relationships. Individuals may neglect responsibilities, miss work or school and avoid social commitments in favor of obtaining or using drugs. Trust can erode between the individual and their family or colleagues, while stigma and social judgment may further discourage seeking help. The influence of peers who also use opioids or other substances can reinforce addictive behaviors and reduce the likelihood of seeking recovery. Health risks are another critical factor affecting daily functioning. Opioid use can depress respiratory function, increase vulnerability to infections and interfere with normal hormonal balance. Injection use carries additional risks, including exposure to blood borne pathogens. Long-term use may also cause gastrointestinal problems, liver issues and reduced immune function, which make daily activities more challenging and limit overall quality of life. Overdose remains a constant threat, requiring immediate medical attention and potentially resulting in long-term neurological or physical consequences.

Recovery from opioid addiction focuses on restoring both physical stability and daily functioning. Medical interventions, such as Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) with methadone, buprenorphine or naltrexone, help manage cravings and withdrawal symptoms, allowing individuals to regain a sense of normalcy. Behavioral therapies, including cognitive-behavioral therapy and motivational support, assist in developing coping mechanisms, improving decision-making and addressing emotional difficulties. Participation in peer support groups and community programs reinforces positive behavior and provides a sense of accountability. Daily routines and responsibilities are gradually rebuilt as individuals regain control over their lives. Structured schedules, goal-setting and reintegration into work or educational environments are

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essential for sustaining recovery. Support from family, friends and professional networks improves consistency and helps individuals navigate challenges without returning to substance use. Emphasis on skills such as stress management, time management and emotional regulation enhances overall functioning and reduces the likelihood of relapse. Preventing relapse is an ongoing process. Individuals in recovery must recognize triggers, anticipate stressful situations and develop practical strategies for coping without resorting to opioids. Regular follow-ups with healthcare providers, participation in counselling and engagement in supportive social networks strengthen resilience and reinforce adaptive behaviors. Understanding the wide-ranging impact of opioid addiction on daily functioning highlights the importance of early intervention, comprehensive treatment and continuous support.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, opioid addiction affects physical health, psychological stability, social relationships and occupational and financial responsibilities. The resulting impairment in daily functioning creates a cycle of dependence that is difficult to overcome without structured treatment and ongoing support. Addressing these challenges through medical intervention, behavioral therapy and social reinforcement allows individuals to restore normalcy, regain independence and improve quality of life. Recognizing the comprehensive impact of opioid addiction emphasizes the need for awareness, compassion and coordinated approaches to reduce the burden of this condition on individuals and society