

At-A-Glance

Opioid Overdose

In the case of overdose, **CALL 9-1-1**

Drug overdose deaths and opioid-involved deaths continue to increase in the United States. The majority of drug overdose deaths (more than six out of ten) involve an opioid. Since 1999, the number of overdose deaths involving opioids (including prescription opioids and heroin) quadrupled. From 2000 to 2015 more than half a million people died from drug overdoses. 91 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.



91
AMERICANS

die every day from an **opioid overdose** (that includes prescription opioids and heroin).

Heroin is commonly known as Big H, Black Tar, Chiva, Hell Dust, Horse, Negra, Smack, and Thunder.



One of the most significant effects of heroin use is addiction. With regular heroin use, tolerance to the drug develops. Once this happens, the abuser must use more heroin to achieve the same intensity. Physical symptoms of heroin use include: drowsiness, respiratory depression, constricted pupils, nausea, a warm flushing of the skin, dry mouth, and heavy extremities.

Because heroin abusers do not know the actual strength of the drug or its true contents, they are at a high risk of overdose or death. The effects of a heroin overdose are: slow and shallow breathing, blue lips and fingernails, clammy skin, convulsions, coma, and possible death.



Heroin is typically sold as a **white or brownish powder**, or as the black sticky substance known on the streets as “**black tar heroin**.” Although purer heroin is becoming more common, most street heroin is “cut” with other drugs or with substances such as sugar, starch, powdered milk, or quinine.

Other opioids such as OxyContin®, Vicodin®, codeine, morphine, methadone, and fentanyl can cause similar effects as heroin.

Sources: Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC.gov), Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA.gov)



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