

Pain Killers Can Be Just Plain Killers

An opioid prescription is filled about every 9 seconds in South Carolina, and opioid misuse remains an epidemic in our state. While opioids can help manage chronic pain, it's important to know there are safer, effective alternatives. Fake pills containing fentanyl are also becoming more common—and more deadly. The statistics below show why opioids should only be used with extreme caution.

In 2023, there were 2,157 drug overdose deaths in South Carolina. That's an approximately 6% decrease from 2022, marking the first decline since 2014.

Overdose deaths in 2023 were still 91% higher than in 2019, nearly double the pre-pandemic level.

Fentanyl was involved in nearly 72% of those deaths, on par with 2022, and increased by 233% since 2019.

Unintentional overdoses made up 96% of all overdose deaths in 2023, underscoring just how quickly a mistake can turn fatal.

Roughly 1 in 10 people prescribed opioids for chronic pain develop an addiction.

4 in 5 heroin users started by misusing prescription pain killers.

1 in 7 high school students has misused prescription opioids at least once.

100% of opioid overdoses can be prevented.

Help stop South Carolina's opioid epidemic.

- Store any prescription medications safely and securely.
- Find safe drug disposal locations.
- Learn about the dangers of fake pills.
- Know where to get help.
- And ask your medical professional about safe, effective alternatives to prescription opioids.

Learn more at
JUST PLAIN KILLERS.COM

An initiative of the Office of Substance Use Services (OSUS),
S.C. Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities