

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF OPIOID/HEROIN

Heroin produces a “downer” effect that rapidly induces a state of relaxation and euphoria (related to chemical changes in the pleasure centers of the brain). Like other opiates, heroin use blocks the brain’s ability to perceive pain. Heroin abusers, particularly those with prior history of drug abuse, may initially be able to conceal signs and symptoms of their heroin use.

TYPICAL SYMPTOMS

- Mellow and unmotivated attitude
- Moving slowly
- Itchy skin
- Dry mouth
- Chapped lips
- Hyper alertness followed by nodding off
- Sleeping more than usual
- Hygiene becomes less important
- Different speech than normal -slurred or lowered tone
- Grades begin to drop
- Responsibilities left undone
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Lying
- Sneaky behavior
- Avoiding eye contact
- Wearing long sleeves or long pants unseasonably
- Hacking cough
- Weight loss
- Pinpoint pupils
- An apparent heaviness to arms and legs
- Picking at skin until it scabs over
- Infections or abscesses
- Nosebleeds
- Always cold
- Constant sniffing
- Dark circles and puffy eyes
- Needle marks or tracks
- Constipation while using
- Diarrhea when withdrawing
- Lots of increased mileage on car
- Missing items - money, pills, valuables
- Spoons with burn marks
- Straws or empty pen cases
- Rubber straps
- Syringes
- Small cotton pieces from cotton balls or ear swabs