

The Great OPIOID SIDE EFFECT Lottery



Opioids ('strong painkillers') can be really useful for a short time – after an injury or surgery. But longer term they aren't much help. **They only reduce pain for about 10 percent of people in the long term.**

So out of every 100 people, 90 get no benefit long term. And they'll still get the side effects.

If you're taking opioids, the chances are you'll be experiencing at least some of the side effects listed here. **Tick the ones that affect you**, and you may decide it's time to review your medicines with your clinician.

(Remember – never come off your medicines suddenly as this may cause other problems).

<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling dizzy, sickness	17 to 35 in every 100 people
<input type="checkbox"/> Sweating	35 in every 100 people
<input type="checkbox"/> Confused, sleepy	14 to 29 in every 100 people
<input type="checkbox"/> Constipation	20 to 40 in every 100 people
<input type="checkbox"/> Risk of falls and fractures	
<input type="checkbox"/> Weight gain	29 in every 100 people

<input type="checkbox"/> Dry mouth	50 in every 100 people
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced sex drive, erectile dysfunction, infertility	25 in every 100 people
<input type="checkbox"/> Unable to pass urine	4 in every 100 people
<input type="checkbox"/> Immune system affected	
<input type="checkbox"/> Increased levels of pain	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sleep problems	26 in every 100 people
<input type="checkbox"/> Forget things / memory loss	24 in every 100 people
<input type="checkbox"/> Euphoria (feeling high)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mood changes	
<input type="checkbox"/> Emotionally numb	

Other consequences

Tolerance – your body gets used to it, so the same dose is less effective than it used to be

Dependence – withdrawal symptoms if stopping suddenly or without clinical support

Addiction – psychological dependence and behaviour patterns develop

Misuse – not using them in a responsible way

