

MY JOURNEY.
BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO WALK YOURS ALONE

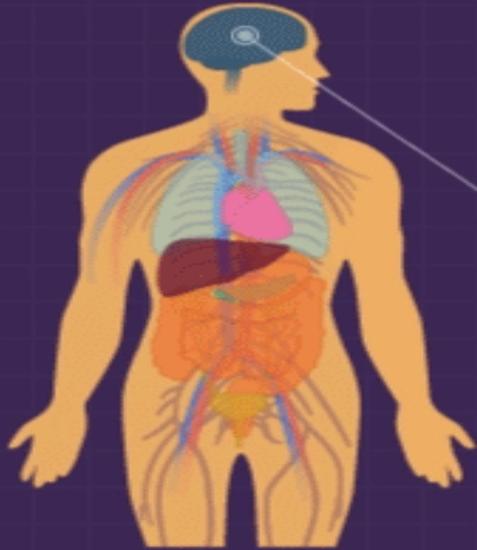


The Effects of Opioids on the stomach

- Poor digestion
- Severe constipation and problems urinating
- Nausea and vomiting
- Acid reflux
- Inflammation and bloating
- Perforated bowel
- Hormone related disorders
- Vitamin and mineral deficiencies



The Effects of Opiates on the Brain



• Opiate painkillers can cause daytime sedation or sleepiness.

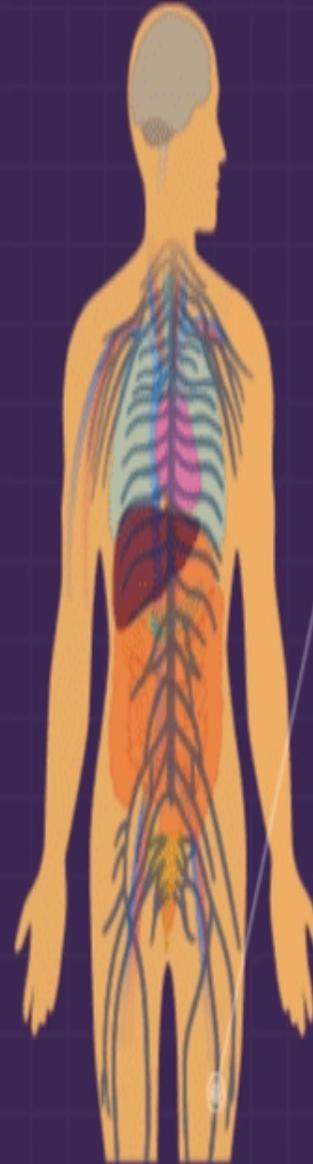
• Chronic painkiller use is associated with a higher risk of major depression.

- Clinical depression, anxiety and other mental health issues.
- Changes in behaviour towards family and friends. Lack of motivation. Changes in sleeping pattern
- Decreased libido
- Alterations in brain structure and function including: Hallucinations, Involuntary muscle spasms, sedation and respiratory depression, difficulty concentrating and thinking clearly
- Lack of pleasure

- Increase in pain
- Slower reaction times
- Poor memory and planning
- Impulsive decision making
- Central Sleep apnoea
- Severe itching

➤ **Overdose**

The Effects of Opiates on the Nervous System



- Opioid-induced hyperalgesia can cause greater pain and sensitization.
- Opioids can cause psychomotor impairment, which is a slowing of physical movement.

Opioid withdrawal symptoms

- Constant yawning
- Runny nose and eyes
- Aching muscles and joints
- Insomnia
- Excessive sweating
- Fever
- Chills
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Goose bumps
- Unpleasant moods



YOU ARE NO LONGER ALONE

- The shame, the embarrassment and the guilt you're feeling, I felt it too
- There is a way forward for you to take back control of your life
- Coping without medication is possible



SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Peer led support working along side clinicians and pain clinics to support patients, including:
- REBT - SMART Recovery. Face to face group and virtual meetings. Based on a scientifically proven four point program of:
 - Building and maintaining motivation.
 - Coping with urges and cravings.
 - Managing thoughts, feelings and behaviours.
 - Living a balanced life.SMART also runs a program to support the family, friends and carer's of the patient.
- Providing direct support for the patient including virtual support. To also provide support for family, friends and carer's of the patient.
- Access to lived experience led private Facebook group, offering support from a family feel community of prescription medication addicts in recovery.

SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Suffering from chronic pain can be extremely frustrating and cause low mood in itself. The following alternative support is also available:
- RTN (Recovery Through Nature). A place for patients to escape those four walls and enjoy nature. Mixing with others who are either going through, or have been through the same. An excellent way to meet new friends and know you are not alone.
- Connection to Social prescribing service.
- IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapy) for support with mental health issues.