Narcotic Withdrawal

If you take opiate drugs for a long time, you may become dependent on them. Stopping these medicines suddenly can cause physical symptoms of withdrawal. Narcotics include opiate prescription pain medicines, as well as heroin. Commonly prescribed narcotics include: codeine drugs, hydrocodone, oxycodone, methadone, morphine.

Opiates tend to slow down body and mental function. When you quit opiates, your body and mind are stimulated. **Some of these withdrawal symptoms include:**

- Irritability.
- Runny nose.
- Diarrhea.
- Muscle spasms.
- Chills.
- Drug cravings.
- Anxiety.
- "Gooseflesh".
- Nausea.
- Sleeplessness.
- Sweats.
- Confusion.

Withdrawal symptoms are troubling. The severity depends on:

- Your body's make up.
- The amount of drugs you used.
- The length of time you used them.

You may be at greater risk of having a seizure during the first several days of withdrawal from sedative drugs (like narcotics). Narcotic withdrawal rarely causes a seizure. Although uncomfortable, withdrawal for adults is not life threatening unless there is a medical complication, such as heart disease.

It is good to have someone with you who knows what to do if you:

- Become dehydrated.
- Have a seizure.

Drink fluids, get plenty of rest, and take hot baths. Medicine such as clonidine, mild sedatives, or muscle relaxants may be used to help control withdrawal symptoms. Over the counter medications that may also be helpful are: loperamide or kaolin and pectin for diarrhea and antacids for upset stomach.

If you were taking prescription pain medications, and these medications have caused problems for you be sure you have a follow-up with your caregiver within the next few days. Be open about this problem. If you are dependent or addicted to street drugs and you are tired of it, contact a local drug and alcohol treatment center or Narcotics Anonymous.

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