

# Get Help

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## Start the Conversation

As the heroin epidemic continues to sweep across the State, it's time for New Yorkers to start the conversation. We have the tools and resources to assist you, your family and your friends to get the treatment they need for heroin or prescription opioid abuse. If a family member or friend is using substances, don't wait to speak up. Start the conversation before it's too late.

- Listen to what they have to say and express your concern.
- Let them know substance use is a medical disorder and that there is help.
- Provide support as they seek help, make the phone call together, provide a ride to the appointment and call them after to follow up.
- Express your own feelings about the effect of substance use and provide feedback.

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## Take Action

Take action against substance use by making drug use more difficult.

- Take an inventory of the prescription drugs in your home, lock them up, and make sure your [medicine cabinet is safe](#).
- Take away driving privileges in order to stop them from attaining drugs or driving while impaired.
- Take away cell phones and cash to make it more difficult for them to access heroin or opioids.

Harm reduction initiatives are essential in keeping heroin and opiate users alive and safe until they are ready to take action and seek treatment. Proper [syringe access & disposal](#), as well as overdose prevention can help address the immediate health and safety concerns faced by people who use heroin and opiates.

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## Access Treatment

New York State is making strides to make treatment more accessible to those in need. The state now has a searchable listing of available treatment beds at NYS OASAS-certified substance use disorder treatment facilities, including facility location and contact information. Get the treatment you need.

Recognizing the need for help for substance use disorder is the first step on the path toward recovery. Educating yourself about substance use disorder and understanding the various types of care is very important. Find resources, treatment options, and frequently asked questions [here](#).

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## Medicated Assisted Treatment

Methadone, Buprenorphine and Naltrexone are 3 FDA approved medications that can potentially reverse the effects of an overdose and assist with the treatment of opiate dependence.

- **Methadone:** Methadone is a synthetic opioid that mitigates opioid withdrawal symptoms. At higher doses it can block the effect of heroin and other drugs containing opiates. Methadone can only be dispensed at an outpatient opioid treatment program.
- **Buprenorphine:** Buprenorphine is a partial opioid agonist and when dosed appropriately it suppresses withdrawal symptoms by creating similar side effects to heroin and methadone, such as euphoria and respiratory depression. These side effects are generally milder and less dangerous than heroin and methadone. Buprenorphine treatment can only be performed at intensive outpatient treatment programs.
- **Naltrexone:** Naltrexone is a non-addictive antagonist used to treat opioid dependence by blocking the opioid receptors so they cannot be activated. Unlike the other medications, Naltrexone does not mimic the effects of opioids, it blocks receptor sites so that other substances present in the patient's system cannot bind to them.

Read more about the medications [here](#).

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## Pay For Treatment

New York State law requires OASAS funded treatment programs to provide treatment services for people who cannot pay for the services.

**New York State of Health:** New Yorkers can shop, compare and enroll in low cost, quality health plans, as well as receive financial assistance based on their income. This marketplace enables New Yorkers to check their eligibility and enroll in Medicaid, Child Health Plus and Qualified Health Plans. For more information call 855-955-5777 or visit the [New York State of Health](#) website.

**Health Insurance Coverage:** When seeking treatment, it is critical to understand the details of your health insurance plan, as well as your right and your co-pays. In order to learn more about your coverage, you should contact your health insurance provider or visit the [New York State Office of Financial Services](#) website.

**Right to Coverage:** Under New York and Federal Law, if you have insurance you have the right to receive the following addiction treatment services when medically necessary:

- Unlimited detoxification services in a hospital
- Unlimited inpatient care in a hospital, inpatient rehabilitation or residential treatment facility
- Unlimited outpatient care in both outpatient facilities or in your provider's office

- Outpatient methadone treatment including suboxone and subutex, if your health insurance includes a prescription drug benefit

**Denial of Coverage:** If your health insurer denies coverage for any addiction treatment services for the reason that it is not medically necessary, you have a right to appeal the decision with your health insurer. If your health insurer upholds the denial you have the right to an external appeal with an independent reviewer. Learn more about your rights as a health insurance consumer [here](#).