



News Now

John R. Kasich, Governor
Tracy Plouck, Director

March 31, 2017

>>> **New Limits on Prescription Opiates Will Save Lives and Fight Addiction**

Ohio is updating its opiate prescribing policies for treating acute pain by giving them the force of law. The state began creating its voluntary guidelines in 2012, together with the medical community, even before the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued guidelines last March. After close analysis of the state's electronic prescribing data, Ohio will now take the next step to update its policies to place commonsense limits on opiate prescribing for acute pain. These improvements can lead to an estimated reduction of opiate doses in Ohio by 109 million per year while preserving the ability of clinicians to address pain in a competent and compassionate way.

Highlights of Ohio's new opiate prescribing limits for acute pain include:

1. No more than seven days of opiates can be prescribed for adults;
2. No more than five days of opiates can be prescribed for minors;
3. The total morphine equivalent dose (MED) of a prescription for acute pain cannot exceed an average of 30 MED per day;
4. Health care providers can prescribe opiates in excess of the new limits only if they provide a specific reason in the patient's medical record. Unless such a reason is given, a health care provider is prohibited from prescribing opiates that exceed Ohio's limits;
5. Prescribers will be required to include a diagnosis or procedure code on every controlled substance prescription, which will be entered into Ohio's prescription monitoring program, OARRS;
6. The new limits do not apply to opioids prescribed for cancer, palliative care, end-of-life/hospice care or medication-assisted treatment for addiction;
7. The new limits will be enacted through rules passed by the State Medical Board, Board of Pharmacy, Dental Board and Board of Nursing.

Related Media Coverage:

3.31.17 | *Toledo Blade* [Governor aims to reduce Ohio's overdose deaths](#)

3.30.17 | *WKSU 89.7* [Ohio moves to limit most opioid prescriptions to seven days, five for children](#)

3.30.17 | *Associated Press* [Ohio to put new limits on pain meds](#)

3.30.17 | *Columbus Dispatch* [New rule limits narcotic painkiller prescriptions to seven days](#)

>>> Public Health Forum on Opiates -- April 6

Please join The Ohio State University (OSU) College of Public Health next **Thursday, April 6** from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for **“The Opioid Crisis in Ohio: Seeking New Solutions from the Community.”** This series of presentations, held at the Ohio Statehouse Atrium, will explore the opioid crisis in Ohio and possible solutions to reduce its impact on our communities. Speakers include experts from OSU and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, as well as professionals from across the state who are battling this epidemic on the front lines. During lunch, John Begala, retired executive director of the Center for Community Solutions, will address the topic of generational changes in small-town Ohio.

Several registration spots remain for this event. [Click here](#) to register. [Click here](#) to view the agenda.

>>> President Signs Executive Order Establishing the President's Commission on Combatting Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis

President Donald J. Trump signed an Executive Order establishing the President's Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis. The Commission will be chaired by Governor Chris Christie and will study ways to combat and treat the scourge of drug abuse, addiction, and the opioid crisis, which was responsible for more than 50,000 deaths in 2015. The Commission will work closely with the White House Office of American Innovation led by Jared Kushner. Read more about the [Executive Order here](#).

In the News

3.30.17 | *Newsweek* [The U.S. is in the grip of a heroin epidemic and white men are most vulnerable](#)

3.29.17 | *Columbus Business First* [For-profit operator set to open second hospital for mental health and addiction treatment](#)

3.29.17 | *Columbus Dispatch* [Fighting drug addiction with faith](#)

3.29.17 | *Dayton Daily News* [Opiate crisis: Ohio lawmakers want to curb overprescribing](#)

3.29.17 | WKSU 89.7 [Ohio Senate Adopts Harsher Penalties for Illegal Fentanyl Possession](#)

3.29.17 | *Cleveland Plain Dealer* [Rocky River panel hopes to eliminate stigma linked to heroin addiction](#)

3.29.17 | *Cleveland Plain Dealer* [Health rankings highlight Ohio's opiate crisis, youth dropout and unemployment](#)

3.29.17 | *Toledo Blade* [Kasich calls for healthcare flexibility](#)

3.28.17 | *Columbus Dispatch* [Fear of losing Medicaid mental health services hasn't gone away](#)

3.28.17 | *WCMH-TV 4* [New facility will expand mental health, addiction treatment options in Central Ohio](#)

3.28.17 | *Associated Press* [Rate of Drug-Addicted Babies spikes over 10 years](#)

3.28.17 | *Science Daily* [Evaluation between maternal mental health and discharge readiness](#)

3.24.17 | Columbus Dispatch [Patrol dispatches new troopers in war on drugs, human trafficking](#)

3.21.17 | *Newark Advocate* [Drug addiction drives spike in Ohio foster care](#)

Please share widely and encourage your colleagues to subscribe to *OhioMHAS eNews* on our [website](#). Also, be sure to join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Flickr](#)!