



The Opioid Crisis has had a devastating impact on the entire state of Indiana.

Many people who struggle with opioid dependency face a wide range of stigmas that prevent them from seeking treatment. We don't want them to become an opioid overdose statistic.

How Do Opioids Work?

Opioids work by:

- 1) Binding to brain receptors
- 2) Minimizing the perception of pain
- 3) Stimulating “reward” centers in the brain
- 4) Triggering feelings of pleasure, relaxation and euphoria

#KnowTheFacts



Opioids can cause significant and long-lasting changes to the brain and your body. And your brain can't tell whether the opioid was prescribed by a doctor or acquired illegally, This is how they work. Opioids act like keys

- 1) They Bind to locks or “receptors” in your brain.
- 2) This turns up the release of chemical signals in your brain which minimize the perception of pain,
- 3) Stimulate “reward” centers in your brain, and
- 4) Trigger feelings of pleasure, relaxation and euphoria.

Continued use of opioids causes dramatic changes in brain function and increases the physical desire and need for the drug. The feelings of pleasure create positive feedback in some people. Think of the pleasurable feelings you get when doing something you love to do – only think of it on steroids, creating intense desire to have that feeling again. Once a person has developed physical dependence, abstinence will cause withdrawal symptoms. After a while, people take opioids just to avoid the physical withdrawal symptoms.

This leads to the behavioral aspects of opioid use disorder - the obsession with planning and and getting opioids that drives the a person to seek drugs despite the negative consequences to themselves and their loved ones.



These **changes to the brain** result in what we call “Opioid Use Disorder.” Just like cardiologists can see changes to the heart after a heart attack, neuroscientists (people who study brain function) can actually see these changes on MRI scans and other studies.

Based on decades of study and evidence, neuroscientists have concluded that addiction is a chronic brain disease, precipitated by long-term changes to the biological structures of the brain.

yes, Opioid Use Disorder is a disease.

Thinking about Opioid Use Disorder as a disease, or something that happens to you, rather than a moral failure, or something you choose to do, helps us to humanize people with addiction, and begins to reduce the bias and stigma towards those with this disease.



Understanding and acknowledging the disease of addiction also makes it easier for people to seek and access the treatment they need to get better.

For example, a person with diabetes understands that she has a disease that can be managed with medical care and lifestyle changes. In the same manner, a person with Opioid Use Disorder also has a disease that can be managed with medical care and lifestyle changes.

There are treatments for Opioid Use Disorder that work as well as treatments for diabetes to help people manage their disease.

What is the Most Effective Treatment Option?

Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)

Combines prescribed medication and behavioral therapies to treat opioid use disorder

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According to the SAMHSA, Medication-assisted Treatment is “the use of medications, in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies, to provide a whole-patient approach to the treatment of substance use disorders.”

MAT is the combination of one of three FDA-approved medications and counseling and cognitive behavioral therapy.

The three medications are methadone, buprenorphine (suboxone, subutex) and naltrexone (vivitrol). Each medication works differently to reduce opioid withdrawal symptoms and/or block opioids’ euphoric effects on the brain.

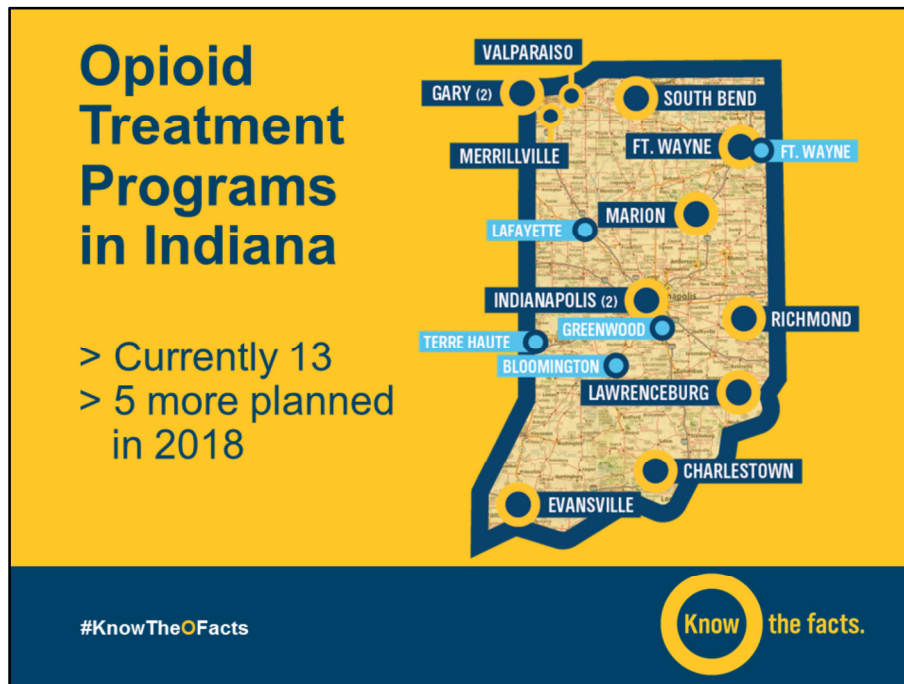
Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is the most effective method of treatment for an opioid use disorder.

MAT is considered the gold standard for the treatment of opioid use disorder because it:

- Reduces drug use
- Reduces risk of overdose and death

- Prevents injection behaviors
- Reduces criminal behavior

Source: National Council for Behavioral Health, Tom Hill, MSW, VP Addiction and Recovery National Council; Presentation: Medication-assisted Treatment and Recovery; Rolling Out the Welcome MAT



There are Opioid Treatment Programs regulated by the state that prescribe all three medications, and also medical providers that have a special waiver to prescribe two of the three medications.

Currently Indiana has 13 Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs)

In 2018, 5 new OTPs are opening:

- Fort Wayne / Allen County
- Lafayette / Tippecanoe County
- Terre Haute / Vigo County
- Greenwood / Johnson County
- Bloomington / Monroe County



Understanding and acknowledging the disease of addiction reduces the stigma, and reduces the barriers to seeking and accessing treatment.

And with treatment comes the hope of Recovery.

Hoosiers need to know that Recovery is Possible.

What can you do to reduce the stigma?

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So, what can you do to reduce the stigma around Opioid Use Disorder?

Language is powerful – especially when talking about addictions.

Stigmatizing language perpetuates negative perceptions around Opioid Use Disorder.

By using “Person First” language – we focus on the person NOT the disorder.

Language matters

SAY THIS → **NOT THIS**

Person with Opioid Use Disorder	Addict, user, druggie, junkie, abuser
Disease	Drug habit
Person living in recovery	Ex-addict
Person arrested for a drug violation	Drug offender
Substance dependent	Hooked

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For example, we should say This instead of ...

Language matters

SAY THIS → **NOT THIS**

Medication is a treatment tool	Medication is a crutch
Had a setback	Relapsed
Maintained recovery; substance-free	Stayed clean

Sources: Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Changing the Language of Addiction*, 01/09/17.
National Council for Behavioral Health, *Language Matters*, September 2015.

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In Review

- **Know the “O” facts**
 - Opioid Use Disorder is a Disease
 - There is Treatment
 - Recovery is Possible
- **Be aware of your attitudes and behavior**
- **Choose your words carefully**
 - Avoid Hurtful labels
- **Be kind to everyone**

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In Review

- **Educate others**
- **Be supportive, include everyone**
- **Replace negative attitudes with evidence-based facts**
- **Offer compassionate support**
- **Treat people with Opioid Use Disorder with dignity and respect**

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UNDERSTANDING
OPIOID USE DISORDER

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