

# OxyContin Withdrawal | Timeline, Symptoms, Detox

## What is OxyContin?

OxyContin is an opioid narcotic analgesic, which means that it is a prescription painkiller used to treat constant pain. The types of pain most often countered with OxyContin are those from cancer or surgery. Certain recurring conditions which produce pain can use OxyContin as a pain reliever. The drug works by binding with receptors both in the brain and the spinal system, causing a general feeling of wellness and pain relief.

It is usually taken in tablets every 12 hours. Higher milligram dosages are only prescribed by doctors in cases of extreme pain and discomfort, and higher dosages can lead to higher instances of addiction. One should be careful before rising to a higher dosage of OxyContin.

## What are OxyContin Withdrawal Symptoms?

Withdrawal symptoms originating from OxyContin addiction can be wide-ranging and have many effects. The Withdrawal is similar to that from heroin, codeine and morphine addictions. The actual symptoms will vary depending on the depth of addiction and the length of time spent addicted to OxyContin.

In general, the patient may experience agitation, anxiety, muscle aches, tearing of the eyes, insomnia, a runny nose, sweating or yawning in the early stages of withdrawal. This is an effect of the brain adapting to different neurochemical levels now that the drug is leaving the body. Later in withdrawal the patient may experience abdominal cramping, diarrhea, dilated pupils, goosebumps, nausea or vomiting.

These symptoms are normally not life-threatening, although vomiting may induce choking if the patient aspirates some of the debris ejected from the digestive system. In addition, once withdrawal is in effect even a small dose of OxyContin may be enough to throw the biological system into shock, causing death. OxyContin should only be taken during withdrawal under a doctor's orders.

## What are the Stages of the OxyContin Withdrawal Timeline?

Withdrawal from OxyContin addiction tends to last between several days on the low end to as long as a week for more intense addictions. If the withdrawal period lasts for longer than a week, a doctor should be contacted immediately.

### *Days 1-3*

The first symptoms will be felt within 72 hours and will usually encompass the lighter, more uncomfortable symptoms such as agitation and anxiety. The mood is likely to be affected and cause mental discomfort in addition to the physical symptoms. More physical symptoms such as runny nose or tearing may follow.

### *Days 4-6*

The peak of the withdrawal period is likely to come during this stage. It is the stage most likely to result in vomiting or nausea, diarrhea and goosebumps. This stage is often the most uncomfortable for

patients and may result in the strongest desire for an OxyContin release, although this should be avoided unless prescribed by a doctor.

#### *Days 7+*

The symptoms should subside by this point, growing infrequent or weak enough to fade from the patient's awareness. If the withdrawal symptoms continue past this point or do not show signs of fading, a doctor should be notified immediately so that the patient may be supervised or hospitalized for emergency treatment.

### Why Should I Detox?

OxyContin possesses a fatal flaw in its treatment of pain. The drug works by changing pain receptors in the brain and spinal column but each use of OxyContin increases the patient's tolerance to its effects. This causes a rapidly-growing cycle of increasing dosages to acquire the same pain-killing effect. This can cause dependence and eventual addiction via the changing of the patient's neurochemistry.

Detoxing can be dangerous if done poorly. Patients who rush into detox without researching run the risk of quitting "cold turkey" which may lead to death through the shock of the patient's nervous system and body. The patient's body has often built up a biological dependence on OxyContin- that is, the patient requires it to live for the time being- so removing it entirely may cause worse symptoms than withdrawal.

A more measured "tapering" approach often works better, during which time the patient lowers the amount of OxyContin taken dosage by dosage until the body learns to survive without the drug. This approach takes more time but is often safer and done under the supervision of medical professionals, allowing emergency assistance to be nearby in case of emergency.

### What is the Next Treatment Step?

There are two types of rehabilitations: inpatient or outpatient. Neither choice is better than the other, but they are each more appropriate for different patients. A patient's doctor will often help them choose which type of clinic to work with.

Inpatient rehab involves the patient remaining at a medical facility for the duration of addiction treatment. The patient lives at the facility provided and is cared for by professionals 24 hours a day. This method has several advantages, including on-hand staff for emotional and physical support no matter the time of day, supervision to prevent relapse on the part of the patient, and a positive environment for stimulation of positive habits and healthy activities. Inpatient rehab is an excellent choice for those with a high possibility of relapse.

Outpatient rehab is performed with the patient still living at home and visiting a clinic for treatment at appointed times during the week. Scheduling is flexible and allows the patient to continue their lives with a minimum of change or interruption, which can be a good choice for those with financial obligations. Those who take this path should be careful that they have a minimal chance of relapse, as they are not monitored by medical staff to help them make appropriate choices. A strong family or friend network can help patients undergoing outpatient rehab.

## Start Your Journey to Recovery Today!

No matter how one's OxyContin addiction started, it's never too late to start on the path to recovery. It's always possible to recover one's life, no matter how difficult it might seem at first. The best part is that it only becomes easier once the first step is taken.

Take your first step today, and contact a rehab clinic now to start healing now.