

How Does Taking Opioids Permanently Impact Your Brain Health?

PUBLISHED BY:
Taylor Timothy

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Opioids are powerful drugs that help to relieve pain. They are effective, but using them can have some adverse effects. This is more common if opioids are misused. If you take opioids without a prescription, consume higher doses than prescribed, or take them more often than instructed, you can experience drowsiness, nausea, dizziness, mental fog, constipation, and slowed breathing. Misuse of opioids also affects the brain, which will need [treatment](#).

How Can Opioid Use Affect The Brain?

Despite the many benefits of opioids, those who take them medically or recreationally need to know that misuse of opioids can affect the brain.

Opioids Stop The Brain From Producing Dopamine On Its Own

When opioids bind to opioid receptors that regulate reward, they encourage the brain to produce too much dopamine. Dopamine relieves pain and increases pleasure. The brain wants to repeat the processes that cause this reward. Dopamine also plays an important part in motivation and learning. The brain wants to seek out the source of dopamine, which can trigger an opioid craving. Continued use of opioids will let the brain begin to rely on dopamine from opioids as the main source of pleasure. When this happens, the brain is tricked into thinking that it doesn't need to produce dopamine by itself.

If this happens, you may experience:

- Depression
- Lack of motivation
- Poor concentration
- Shaking hands and tremors
- An inability to feel pleasure
- Symptoms of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder
- Short-term memory loss
- Difficulty managing daily tasks

Opioids Make The Brain More Sensitive To Pain

Using opioids for an extended period can cause opioid-induced hyperalgesia or increased sensitivity to pain. Normal stimulation, like a prick, is not very painful, but opioids make the brain more sensitive to pain. Opioids activate receptors that block pain signals from reaching your brain. The body then tries to overcome this block by activating other pain signals, making you more sensitive.

Opioids Can Damage The Brain's Frontal Lobe

The brain's frontal lobe is important for planning, attention, memory, and executive functioning. Chronic opioid use can impair this part of the brain. Even though it is not yet fully understood how opioids damage the front lobe, using the drug for a long time can lead to:

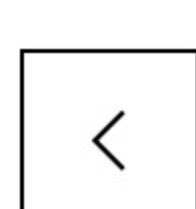
- Memory problems
- Loss of movement
- Poor judgment
- An inability to concentrate
- Speech and language difficulty
- Poor planning and problem-solving skills

Opioids Can Interfere With The Brain's Impulse Control Circuits

As well as many other tasks, the brain works to regulate impulse control. Abusing opioids can disrupt the brain circuits that do this, making resisting opioid cravings even more difficult. Not being able to control your impulses can also lead to aggression that will cause problems with your relationships at work, home, or school.

Treatment That Helps Restore The Brain

Misusing opioids can have a negative impact on the brain. Luckily, the brain is neuroplastic and capable of changing. At [Grand Falls Recovery](#), our [treatment](#) programs can help you to take back control of your life and restore your brain health. A healthy brain is needed for a healthy life. Let [Grand Falls Recovery](#) help you to get there.

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Contact Us

5615 W. 32nd Street
Joplin, MO 64804

1-855-904-5910

info@grandfallsrecovery.com