



METUCHEN HIGH SCHOOL

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May 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The enclosed fact Sheet entitled: "Prescription Opioids: What You Need to Know" is the culmination of this year's work on opioid/drug prevention here at MHS. You can click on the following link to see an electronic version <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdf/AHA-Patient-Opioid-Factsheet-a.pdf>.

District Student Assistance Counselor, Mrs. Judi Cheung, along with the MHS School Counseling Department, the Metuchen Police Department and the Metuchen Municipal Alliance (MMA) have worked together to bring your son/daughter high quality prevention programming that we hope helps all students stay drug and alcohol-free.

In November, all students in MHS saw the play, **ANYTOWN**. They participated in a pre-show activity as well as a post-show follow-up lesson in health and PE classes. An informational pamphlet was electronically sent home in January 2019 that was written by the playwright - Jim Jack.

The wintertime brought a pilot program called **#NotEvenOnce (#NEO)** to our ninth graders. This unique program gave information, education and guest speakers on the opioid crisis from professional paramedics and those who have survived it. Speakers from **#NEO** will be at our Pre-Prom Assembly which will be held on Monday, May 20th for Grades 11 and 12.

Narcan training was offered to all District staff in March through the MMA as a follow-up to a training held in November. Trainings on the administration of Narcan are offered throughout the year all over Middlesex County.

Finally, we sponsored **Hidden in Plain Sight** at MHS to follow-up a very successful show at Edgar Middle School last year. This program brought DEA Agent, Tim McMahon and local therapists to MHS gymnasium to speak to parents about the prevention of drug use and how to talk to your teen about this critical topic.

If you have any questions or concerns about any of the above information, feel free to call my office or the confidential voice mail of Mrs. Cheung. Her number is- 732-321-8744, x5028.

Sincerely,

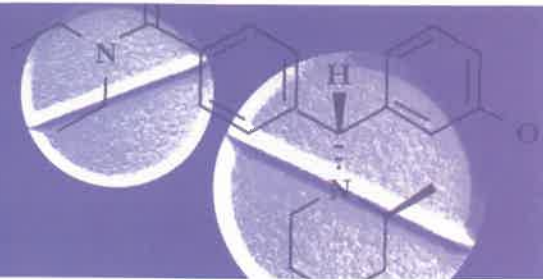
Bruce J. Peragallo
Principal

Mission Statement

Metuchen High School, building on a tradition of academic and co-curricular distinction, provides a healthy and safe learning environment which challenges and supports our students. Our technology-rich instruction and diverse curricular offerings are an integral part of an evolving program that meets each student's intellectual, social, and emotional needs.

Our school encourages all students to discover their talents, develop their strengths, and become global citizens with a strong moral compass. We achieve this through exceptional classroom instruction, data-driven decision-making, and emphasis on developing students' 21st Century skills.

PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Prescription opioids can be used to help relieve moderate-to-severe pain and are often prescribed following a surgery or injury, or for certain health conditions. These medications can be an important part of treatment but also come with serious risks. It is important to work with your health care provider to make sure you are getting the safest, most effective care.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS OF OPIOID USE?

Prescription opioids carry serious risks of addiction and overdose, especially with prolonged use. An opioid overdose, often marked by slowed breathing, can cause sudden death. The use of prescription opioids can have a number of side effects as well, even when taken as directed:

- Tolerance—meaning you might need to take more of a medication for the same pain relief
- Physical dependence—meaning you have symptoms of withdrawal when a medication is stopped
- Increased sensitivity to pain
- Constipation
- Nausea, vomiting, and dry mouth
- Sleepiness and dizziness
- Confusion
- Depression
- Low levels of testosterone that can result in lower sex drive, energy, and strength
- Itching and sweating

As many as
1 in 4
PEOPLE*



receiving prescription opioids long term in a primary care setting struggles with addiction.

* Findings from one study

RISKS ARE GREATER WITH:

- History of drug misuse, substance use disorder, or overdose
- Mental health conditions (such as depression or anxiety)
- Sleep apnea
- Older age (65 years or older)
- Pregnancy

Avoid alcohol while taking prescription opioids. Also, unless specifically advised by your health care provider, medications to avoid include:

- Benzodiazepines (such as Xanax or Valium)
- Muscle relaxants (such as Soma or Flexeril)
- Hypnotics (such as Ambien or Lunesta)
- Other prescription opioids



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

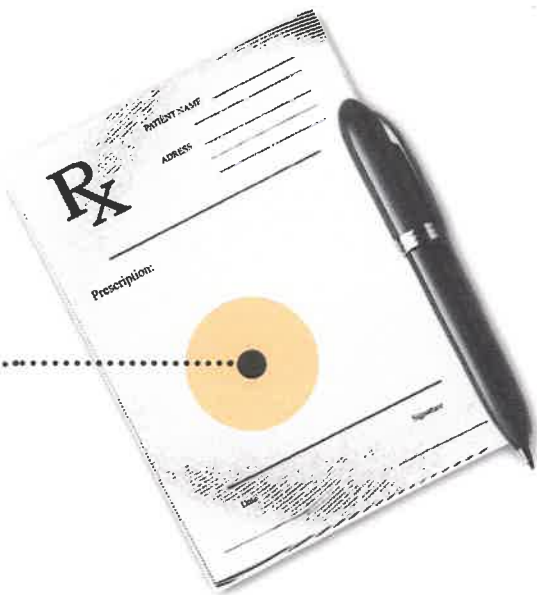


American Hospital
Association®

KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

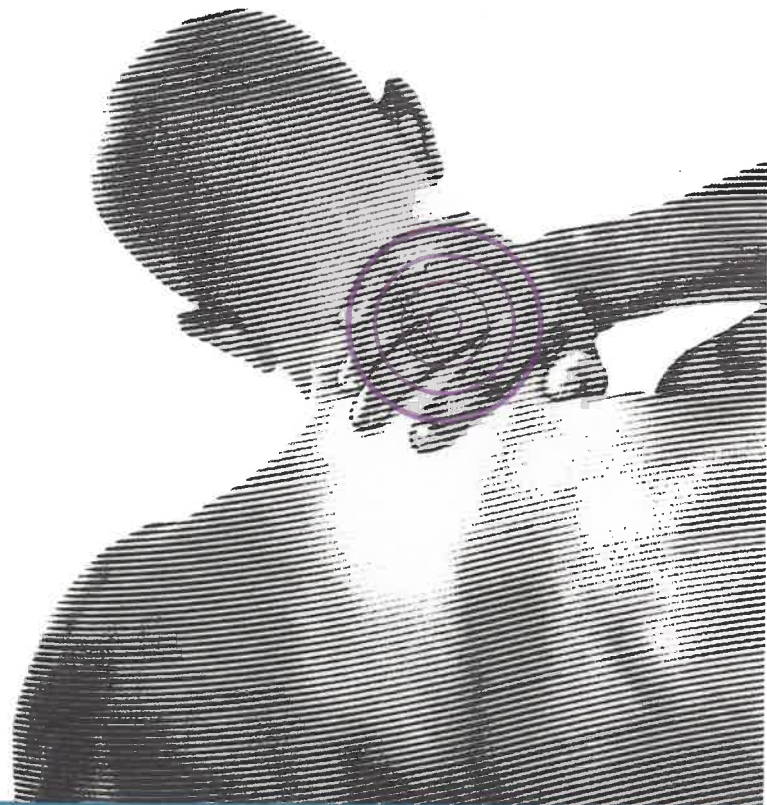
Talk to your health care provider about ways to manage your pain that don't involve prescription opioids. Some of these options **may actually work better** and have fewer risks and side effects. Options may include:

- ❑ Pain relievers such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and naproxen
- ❑ Some medications that are also used for depression or seizures
- ❑ Physical therapy and exercise
- ❑ Cognitive behavioral therapy, a psychological, goal-directed approach, in which patients learn how to modify physical, behavioral, and emotional triggers of pain and stress.



Be Informed!

Make sure you know the name of your medication, how much and how often to take it, and its potential risks & side effects.



IF YOU ARE PRESCRIBED OPIOIDS FOR PAIN:

- ❑ Never take opioids in greater amounts or more often than prescribed.
- ❑ Follow up with your primary health care provider within ___ days.
 - Work together to create a plan on how to manage your pain.
 - Talk about ways to help manage your pain that don't involve prescription opioids.
 - Talk about any and all concerns and side effects.
- ❑ Help prevent misuse and abuse.
 - Never sell or share prescription opioids.
 - Never use another person's prescription opioids.
- ❑ Store prescription opioids in a secure place and out of reach of others (this may include visitors, children, friends, and family).
- ❑ Safely dispose of unused prescription opioids: Find your community drug take-back program or your pharmacy mail-back program, or flush them down the toilet, following guidance from the Food and Drug Administration (www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou).
- ❑ Visit www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose to learn about the risks of opioid abuse and overdose.
- ❑ If you believe you may be struggling with addiction, tell your health care provider and ask for guidance or call SAMHSA's National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP.