



# Medicine Clean Out

## Do You Know Who's in *YOUR* Medicine Cabinet?

### Non-Medical Opioid Use

Opioids are a family of drugs that are usually prescribed to relieve pain. Examples include codeine (in Tylenol #3), oxycodone, morphine, percocet, hydromorphone (Dilaudid) and fentanyl. When used appropriately, prescription opioids can be very effective in treating severe pain. But non-medical opioid use can be dangerous and even deadly.

What is non-medical opioid use?

- Using opioids that haven't been prescribed to you by a doctor
- Using opioids differently than prescribed: taking more of them or using them to feel high rather than pain relief

A 2017 Health Quality Ontario report found that in the fiscal year 2015-2016, about one out of every seven people in Ontario (almost two million individuals) filled an opioid prescription (CCSA 2017).

### Non-Medical Use of Opioid Pain Relievers among Ontario Students

According to the 2017 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS 2017) from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) about 11% of students in Grades 7-12 reported using a prescription opioid pain reliever without a prescription in the past year. This number represents about 97,100 students.

What can you do?

- Use prescription opioids under the guidance of your health care provider, and explore alternatives to opioids for pain control.
- Monitor your prescription opioids. Know how many you have.
- Keep them locked up and out of sight.
- Clean out your medicine cabinet regularly and take them to your pharmacy for safe disposal.

Of those 97,100 students who said that they have used opioid pain relievers for non-medical reasons, 55% of them reported obtaining these drugs from a parent or sibling (OSDUHS 2017)

Want to know more? Check out:

- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- ConnexOntario