What is Opioid Addiction?

- Opioid addiction is a chronic disease that causes you to experience important changes in your life.
  - Examples of these changes may be (1) having the need for greater amounts of opioids to feel the same effect; (2) using opioids to deal with your problems; and (3) spending less time with important people, such as family and friends.

What Are the Major Signs of Opioid Addiction?

- The major signs that someone is addicted to opioids include (1) continuing to use opioids even though the person is experiencing negative changes; (2) needing greater amounts of opioids to feel the same “high”; and (3) experiencing withdrawal symptoms when opioid use is stopped.

Besides Medication, What Else Is Involved in the Treatment of Opioid Addiction?

- You, your doctor, and your counselor will develop a treatment plan that will require you to reflect on how opioid addiction has affected your life.
- During this process, you will need to think about how opioid addiction has changed you physically, emotionally, and socially, as well as how your family life has been affected.
- To recover successfully, examples of changes you may need to make in your life include
  - ✔ Getting more exercise and better nutrition
  - ✔ Managing your problems without using opioids
  - ✔ Developing healthy relationships with people who don’t use drugs
  - ✔ Reconciling with family members and loved ones
  - ✔ Getting in touch with your spiritual side to gain inner strength

How Long Will It Take for Me to Recover From Opioid Addiction?

- Treatment for opioid addiction requires a big commitment from the patient, as the recovery process may be long and difficult.
- Although each patient is different, the length of recovery can range anywhere from weeks to years. It is important to understand that treatment may be ongoing for some patients.
- If treatment is stopped too early, the patient may be at risk for a relapse, or in severe cases, even death.