Reducing the Risk of Methadone Overdose

This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Over the last decade, prescription painkillers have caused thousands of overdose deaths. One, in particular, has played a central role in the epidemic: methadone. Methadone was involved in one in three prescription painkiller deaths in 2009, and about 14 people die every day of overdoses related to methadone.

Health care providers have used methadone safely and effectively to treat drug addiction for decades. But over the past ten years, providers have increased its use for pain. As methadone prescriptions have increased, so has the number of overdoses.

Reduce *your* risk of an overdose. Use methadone *only* as directed by your health care provider. Don't sell or share it with others. Always store methadone in a secure place and dispose of it properly. And if you or someone you care about has a substance abuse problem, get help. Call 1-800-662-HELP.

To learn more, visit www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns.

For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.