

# Opioid Abuse Prevention Initiatives at the University of South Carolina

Overall research shows that drug use for college students is lower than non-college peers with the exception of alcohol and stimulants:

2016 opioid (heroin or prescription pain medications) misuse in the past month:

**1.4%**  
Full-time college students

**2.4%**  
Non-college peers

2016 reported past-year use of narcotics other than heroin without medical supervision

**3.8%**  
Full-time college students

**6.5%**  
Non-college peers

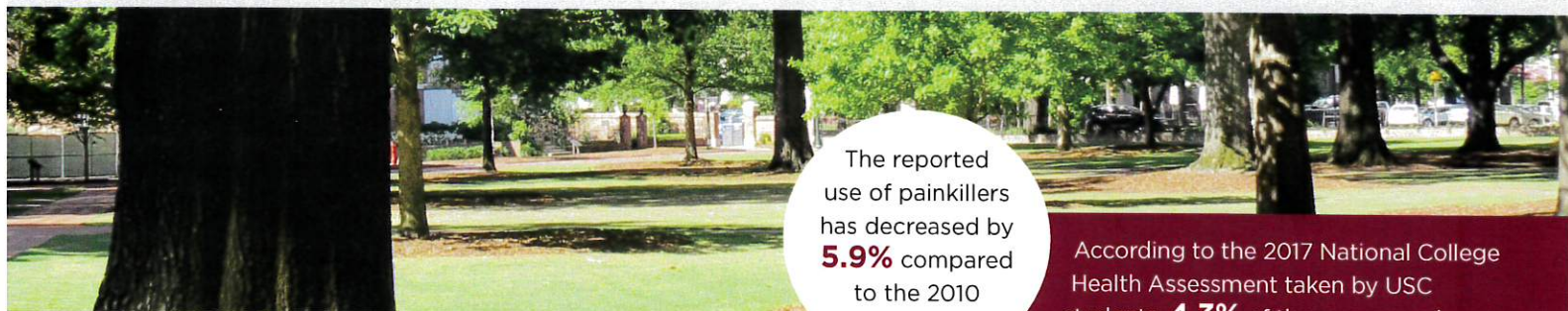
Prevalence of drug use of specific drugs in this class:

**Vicodin:**  
**1.3%** college students  
**3.2%** non-college peers

**OxyContin:**  
**1.9%** college students  
**2.1%** non-college peers

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2015 and 2016

Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use, 2016 Volume II College Student & Adults Ages 19-55



The reported use of painkillers has decreased by **5.9%** compared to the 2010 baseline.

According to the 2017 National College Health Assessment taken by USC students, **4.3%** of those surveyed reported using prescription painkillers that were not prescribed to them within the past 12 months.

## Tactics for Opioid Prevention and Intervention

- Student Health Services rarely prescribes opioids, and they only provide 2-3 days worth with no refills.
- Student Health Services monitors students' requests for controlled substances using the **South Carolina Reporting & Identification Prescription Tracking System (SCRIPTS)** database.
- Medical providers screen for drug/alcohol abuse and have a referral process for campus or community resources if assistance is needed.
- Partnerships exist with community resources, including **LRADAC**, a Columbia-area facility that provides prevention, intervention and treatment programs for substance abuse.
- Student Health Services carries Narcan/Naloxone, the prescription drug that reverses the effects of an opioid overdose, and have trained staff to administer it and recognize the symptoms and signs of opioid abuse.
- USC police officers have intranasal Narcan in their patrol cars and have been trained in recognizing signs and symptoms of opioid overdose and how to administer Narcan.
- USC students are encouraged to be active bystanders. Substance abuse was a topic within the **#WhatWouldCockyDo** bystander accountability campaign.

## Student Health Services

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Although opioid abuse is a national crisis, alcohol is still the number one drug abused on college campuses.

## Tactics for General Substance Abuse **Prevention and Intervention**

- USC has a **Substance Abuse Prevention and Education (SAPE) department**, which is dedicated to promoting healthy low-risk behaviors and responsible decisions with the use of alcohol and other drugs.
- As part of SAPE, the **Students Taking Initiative and Responsibility (STIR)** helps students identify at-risk behaviors, reflect on decision-making skills and take action toward making safer choices that reduce future negative consequences when it comes to substance use.
- SAPE also has a **Community Coalition**, which meets to build capacity and to perform ongoing assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of substance abuse prevention strategies and to make recommendations for policy change.
- All incoming students participate in **AlcoholEdu**, online education assessments that measure students' perceptions about alcohol use and abuse prior to arriving on campus and after several weeks on campus.
- SAPE and Student Health Services have implemented **Gamecock Recovery**, which promotes a healthy environment and lifestyle for students in substance abuse recovery at USC to assist with their academic success and personal growth and provide community support.
- SAPE and Student Health Services also provide other prevention and education programs to bring awareness to substance abuse.



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