

PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE

Indiana State Department of Health
Office of the Indiana Attorney General
Indiana State Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Task Force



SAFE STATES

*Injury & Violence Prevention
Saves Lives*



Lives Saved

In 2011, married couple Senita and Mitch (pictured above) went to Dr. Roth, an Indiana pain physician, for debilitating back pain. Dr. Roth diagnosed both Senita and Mitch with degenerative disc disease. He began treatment with epidural steroid injections. When Dr. Roth changed practice locations, they began seeing another physician in the group. The new doctor relied on opioids for their therapy. This inadequately addressed their pain and further limited their function.

Senita and Mitch then underwent back surgery called spinal fusion. After Mitch's surgery, severe pain and opioid therapy made it impossible for him to get off the couch. He became severely depressed and began talking about suicide. Senita developed an infection after her fusion. Like her husband, she was bedridden on high doses of opioids.

After their physician was arrested for inappropriate opioid prescribing, the couple sought out Dr. Roth, who was serving on the Indiana Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Task Force. Dr. Roth counseled them about the dangerous doses of opioids they were taking, and began compassionately weaning them off their medications so he could accurately assess their pain and mental health, and treat them appropriately. The couple agreed to a treatment contract including regular visits and urine drug monitoring.

Senita and Mitch were successfully tapered off opioids, and their pain is now controlled with spinal cord stimulators. They are able to enjoy life again, including camping, golf, and spending time with their grandchildren.

“If we hadn't seen Dr. Roth, I wouldn't be able to enjoy my life. And I probably wouldn't still have my husband. — *Senita*”

Prescription drug task force combats opioid use, misuse and abuse

PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE

Every 25 minutes in the U.S., someone dies from a prescription drug overdose (PDO). PDO deaths are largely related to increased opioid prescribing and use—including non-medical use—over the last 20 years.

- Even though the U.S. has only 5% of the world's population, over 80% of opioid prescriptions are written here—enough annually to medicate every American adult around the clock for a month (CDC).
- For each prescription opioid overdose death, there are 10 treatment admissions and 32 non-fatal emergency department visits for misuse or abuse.
- Prescription opioid abuse costs more than \$55 billion each year in health care and criminal justice costs and lost productivity.

Indiana:

- ranked 16th among states in 2011 for number of PDO deaths, and
- experienced a 500% increase in number of PDO deaths between 1999 and 2009.

PROGRAM

The Indiana Prescription Drug Abuse

Prevention Task Force was established in 2011 as a joint initiative between the Office of the Indiana Attorney General and the Indiana State Department of Health to:

- advance legislation to combat PDO,
- create awareness and provide education,

- inform the prescribing behaviors of physicians to appropriately treat chronic pain, focusing on improving function, and
- improve access to treatment for those suffering from addiction.

The Task Force includes state legislators, law enforcement, health officials, healthcare providers, pharmacists, state and local agencies, education providers, and consumers affected by PDO.

IMPACT

The Task Force's work reflects the 4 major areas of the national Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Plan:

- **Education:** The Task Force created a toolkit to support administrative code regulating the use of opioids for chronic, non-terminal pain. A website and public service announcements were launched. Over 2,700 healthcare providers have also attended education programs.
 - **Monitoring:** The Task Force secured funding for the ongoing operation of INSPECT, the state's prescription drug monitoring program.
 - **Medication Disposal:** Information on proper disposal and a list of “take back” sites in the state are posted on the website.
 - **Enforcement:** Legislation was passed that required licensure of pain clinic owners.
- In addition, the Task Force addresses treatment and recovery, including liability protection for responders who use naloxone on PDO victims.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON
THE PROGRAM FEATURED ABOVE
www.bitterpill.in.gov



20 Lives Saved

To mark its recent 20th anniversary, the Safe States Alliance is highlighting 20 of the *many* lives saved through injury and violence prevention over the last two decades. These examples show the significant impact that injury and violence prevention has on the lives of real people, every day.