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# Yale New Haven Health

## *Emergency Services*

### **Management of the Patient at Risk for Opiate/Narcotic Withdrawal Guidelines**

Original: 005/1977  
Last Reviewed: 08/18

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#### **Purpose:**

To provide care guidelines for evaluation and management of the patient under the influence of drugs who present to the emergency department.

#### **Guidelines for Care:**

- All patients who present to the with symptoms or signs of drug use, or who present for evaluation and treatment of drug addiction or abuse will initially be evaluated by the triage nurse.
- The use and prescription of methadone is strictly limited for prevention and treatment of- opioid withdrawal. It may be necessary to provide limited continuation of opioid or other drug maintenance in order to avoid the complicating symptoms and signs of drug withdrawal:
  - patients who require hospital admission for medical / surgical condition
  - patients verified to be on a methadone program admitted to the Crisis Intervention Unit
- Any patient with a history of drug abuse or addiction will be asked if they wish to seek rehabilitation.
- Any patient presenting and requesting detoxification will be registered and evaluated by the ED staff prior to disposition
- A Project ASSERT Health Promotion Advocate (HPA) or Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) will make appropriate referrals.
- Follow up care of patients with drug abuse and addiction is not the function of the ED and patients requiring such care will be referred to a drug rehabilitation program or psychiatric service as necessary.