Understanding
Methadone and Pregnancy
for Family and Friends
Central Jersey Family Health Consortium (CJFHC) is a not for profit organization serving Ocean, Monmouth, Mercer, Middlesex, Hunterdon, Somerset, and the Plainfield section of Union County. Our mission is to improve the health of women of childbearing age, infants, and children in the region. Our primary activities include consumer and professional education, outreach, and coordination of services.

The New Jersey Department of Health provided funding to the three New Jersey Maternal Child Health Consortia to establish a statewide Perinatal Addiction Prevention Project (PAPP). Free educational sessions are offered to consumers and professionals on topics such as alcohol, tobacco and other substance use during the childbearing years.
What is Methadone?

- A long lasting, man-made drug that is very useful as a medication for treating addiction to opioids, heroin, and narcotic pain medication, such as Oxycontin and Percocet.
- When taken as prescribed, methadone allows health benefits for Mom without producing euphoric effects.
- Causes no harm to liver, bones, teeth, or immune system for Mom.

What is Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT)?

- Most patients make daily visits to a methadone maintenance clinic for medication, supportive services and therapy.
- It decreases opioid withdrawal symptoms, eliminates physical cravings and blocks the effects of opioid abuse.
- When taken as prescribed, does not cause feelings of being “high” or “drugged”.
- Medication is usually taken 1 to 2 times daily during pregnancy.
- Effects last approximately 24 hours.
- Amount needed to avoid opioid withdrawal is different for everyone and should be decided with the assistance of a physician.
- Use of other prescribed and over the counter medications, homeopathic products and herbs should be discussed with physician, as some can decrease the effects of methadone, requiring a higher dose.
Pregnancy and MMT

Since the early 1970s, research has shown that MMT is safe for a pregnant woman and offers a greater chance of good health for her baby. Medical complications can be reduced before, during and after childbirth. There are many benefits for the pregnant woman if she takes an adequate daily dose to avoid physical withdrawal.

- A steady blood level of methadone helps prevent her unborn baby from going through physical withdrawal.
- Her baby will experience less severe withdrawal at birth than a pregnant woman who is using heroin, other illegal drugs, or prescribed narcotic pain relief medication.
- There are no long lasting harm to children exposed to methadone during pregnancy.
- A high or low dose of methadone does not affect the severity of her baby’s withdrawal at birth.
- The baby may experience physical withdrawal, but baby is not born with the disease of addiction.
- Improved nutrition leads to healthier Mom and baby.
- There is less risk of disease from dirty needles.
- She is more likely to attend birth preparation classes (childbirth and baby care).
- There is less risk of sexual and criminal behaviors associated with addiction.
Opioid Abuse and Pregnancy

- Heroin and narcotic pain medication can be harmful to a pregnant woman and her unborn child.
- Withdrawal symptoms in a pregnant woman can stress her unborn baby and cause complications.
- Risks for baby from maternal opioid use and withdrawal are as follows:
  - Low birth weight.
  - Premature birth.
  - Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) – babies experience tremors, muscle spasms, decrease in oxygen levels, brain damage, and possible choking on meconium (stool) after birth.
  - Miscarriage or stillbirth.
  - Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

- Risks to pregnant women using opioids:
  - Poor nutrition and anemia, as opioid abuse may eliminate appetite and interest in healthy foods.
  - Dirty needle use can cause complications, such as abscesses, cellulitis, heart infection, hepatitis C, HIV/AIDS, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
  - Placental abruption – placenta tears away from uterus causing excessive bleeding.
  - Very high blood pressure.
Breastfeeding and MMT

- Is encouraged unless Mom is abusing alcohol or street drugs, has Hepatitis, or is HIV positive or has AIDS.
- Breast milk is very healthy for the baby, it:
  - Decreases risk of infections for baby.
  - Helps with baby’s brain development.
  - Helps Mom and her baby to bond.
  - Helps to decrease her baby’s fussiness.
- The amount of methadone that passes into breast milk is too small to harm her baby.
- Small doses of methadone in breast milk help to decrease baby’s withdrawal.

Helping Your Loved One In MMT

- Let her know you are proud of her efforts to get well.
- Understand and support her treatment.
- Avoid bringing drugs or alcohol into your home.
- Participate in events sponsored by her treatment center.
- Get involved in support groups.
- Attend family therapy sessions.
- If your loved one has a drug relapse, show understanding but stress the importance of returning to her treatment program, to seek help from her therapists and physicians.
- Learn more at the websites listed in this pamphlet.
References for this Guide

American Academy of Pediatrics
www.aap.org

American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
www.acog.org

National Institute of Health
www.nih.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration
www.samhsa.gov

Self Help Groups

Methadone Anonymous Support
www.methadonesupport.org

Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
www.nar-anon.org

Narcotics Anonymous (multilingual)
www.na.org

Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART)
www.smartrecovery.org

Women for Sobriety
www.womenforsobriety.org
# Methadone Treatment Services in New Jersey

## Addiction Hotline

**211**

24 hours a day/7 days a week

Addiction information, treatment options and referrals

### Northern New Jersey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment Center</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Habitare &amp; Counseling</td>
<td>687 Frelinghuysen Avenue, Newark, NJ 07114</td>
<td>973-799-0508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris County Aftercare</td>
<td>1574 Sussex Turnpike, Randolph, NJ 07869</td>
<td>973-927-6641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Orange Substance Abuse</td>
<td>160 Halstead Street, East Orange, NJ 07018</td>
<td>973-266-5200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Street Treatment Associates</td>
<td>57-59 New Street, Irvington, NJ 07111</td>
<td>973-373-2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inter-County Council on Drug Abuse</td>
<td>480 Kearny Avenue, Kearny, NJ 07032</td>
<td>201-998-7422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paterson Counseling Center, Inc.</td>
<td>321 Main Street, Paterson, NJ 07055</td>
<td>973-523-8316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khaleidoscope Health Care, Inc.</td>
<td>75 Harrison Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07304</td>
<td>201-451-5425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectrum Health Care, Inc.</td>
<td>74-80 Pacific Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07304</td>
<td>201-451-2544</td>
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**Central New Jersey**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>JSAS Healthcare, Inc.</th>
<th>Ocean Monmouth Care</th>
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<tr>
<td>685 Neptune Boulevard, #101</td>
<td>495 Jack Martin Boulevard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neptune, NJ 07753</td>
<td>Brick, NJ 08724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>732-988-8877</td>
<td>732-458-2180</td>
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<tr>
<th>Middletown Medical</th>
<th>Organization for Recovery, Inc.</th>
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<tr>
<td>600 State Route 35</td>
<td>519 North Avenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middletown, NJ 07701</td>
<td>Plainfield, NJ 07060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>732-706-1300</td>
<td>908-769-4700</td>
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<tr>
<th>New Brunswick Counseling Center</th>
<th>Raritan Bay Medical Center</th>
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<tr>
<td>320 Suydam Street</td>
<td>Methadone Treatment Rehab Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Brunswick, NJ 08901</td>
<td>500 Convery Boulevard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>732-246-4025</td>
<td>Perth Amboy, NJ 08861</td>
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<td>732-442-3070</td>
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<tr>
<th>New Horizons Treatment Services</th>
<th>Somerset Treatment Services</th>
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<tr>
<td>132 Perry Street</td>
<td>118 West End Avenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trenton, NJ 08618</td>
<td>Somerville, NJ 08876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>609-394-8988</td>
<td>908-722-1232</td>
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<tr>
<th>Ocean Medical Services</th>
<th>Strathmere Treatment Associates</th>
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<tr>
<td>2001 Route 37 East</td>
<td>1 Lower Main Street, Route 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toms River, NJ 08753</td>
<td>South Amboy, NJ 08879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>732-288-9322</td>
<td>732-727-2555</td>
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Southern New Jersey

Addiction Recovery System  
1200 U.S. 9  
Cape May Court House, NJ  
08210  
609-463-0500

and

408 Bethel Road, Suite B  
Somers Point, NJ 08244  
609-601-8611

John Brooks Recovery Center  
20 South Tennessee Avenue  
Atlantic City, NJ 08401  
609-345-2433

Burlington Comprehensive Counseling  
75 Washington Street  
Mount Holly, NJ 08060  
609-267-9692

South Jersey Drug Treatment Center  
162 Sunny Slope Drive  
Bridgeton, NJ 08302  
856-455-5441

Camden Treatment Associates  
424 Market Street  
Camden, NJ 08102  
856-665-8578

Delaware Valley Medical  
7980 South Crescent Boulevard  
Pennsauken, NJ 08109  
856-665-8578
Additional Resources

www.ncadd.org
Services for individuals and family members concerned about alcohol or drug use.

www.mchlibrary.info/guides/substancepregnancy.html
Information about pregnancy, babies, kids, and tees.

www.beintheKnow.org
Information on the use of alcohol during pregnancy in addition to tobacco use and other drugs during pregnancy.