Dr. W. Michael Hooten | Mayo Clinic

**Prescription Opioids Misuse**

> "More people are dying from accidental opioid prescriptions than from heroin and cocaine combined."

Vivien Williams

Mayo Clinic researchers found 1 in 4 patients prescribed an opioid painkiller for the first time progressed to chronic use. They also found that people with histories of tobacco use and substance abuse were most likely to use opioid painkillers long term.

Dr. Hooten says there are certain clinical characteristics that put some people at risk.

"Psychiatric comorbidity problems, including depression, anxiety substance use, are independent predictors of opioid misuse and even accidental opioid deaths."

Dr. Hooten says finding alternative methods to manage pain, including non-opioid analgesics or other non-medication approaches may help reduce the risk of opioid addiction.

For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I’m Vivien Williams.