

# ★ LANGUAGE WITHOUT LABELS ★



Language can either reinforce stigma or help reduce it. Using person-first, non-stigmatizing language promotes dignity, reduces negative stereotypes, and helps create an environment where people feel supported in seeking treatment and pursuing recovery.

## AVOID

Addict/Junkie  
Drug Abuser  
Drug Habit  
Clean  
Former Addict  
Clean/Dirty

## CHOOSE

Person with substance use disorder  
Substance Use Disorder  
In Recovery  
Person-first-language



**DCHHS**  
Dallas County Health and Human Services  
Healthy People Healthy Communities  
Health and Social Equity



# MYTHS & FACTS

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## MYTHS

- “Opioid addiction only happens to those who misuse drugs.”
- “If you really want to quit, you can just stop.”
- “People with opioid use disorder cannot recover.”

## FACTS

- Prescription opioids carry risks, including the risk of developing opioid use disorders.
- Opioid use disorder is a chronic medical condition, not a moral failing.
- Opioid use disorder is treatable. Evidence-based treatment and recovery support can help people improve their health and continue in recovery.

Stigma and misinformation can become barriers to treatment and recovery. Recognizing opioid use disorder as a treatable condition helps shift the conversation from blame to evidence-based care, support, and recovery.

End the Stigma



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