

Opioid Adverse Drug Events (ADEs)



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Definitions:

CDC: An adverse drug event (ADE) is when someone is harmed by a medicine.¹

CMS: An injury resulting from drug-related medical interventions.²

Quick Facts About ADEs²:

- It is generally estimated that about **half** of ADEs are preventable.³
- Antidiabetic meds, anticoagulants/antiplatelet meds and opioids account for more than 50% of Medicare patient Emergency Department (ED) visits.³
- Each year, ADEs account for nearly **700,000 ED visits and 100,000 hospitalizations.**³

Common Effects of Opioid ADEs²:



**Hallucinations
or delusions**



**Confusion
or dizziness**



Falls



**Lethargy/
somnolence or
unresponsiveness**



**Decreased respiration
or decreased blood
pressure/heart rate**



**Constipation,
abdominal pain or
inability to urinate**

Occurrences That Could Point to an Opioid ADE²:

- Administration of naloxone
- Transfer to hospital
- Contact physician due to onset of new symptoms
- Use of a benzodiazepine
- Order for an abdominal x-ray
- Addition of a laxative or stool softener
- Loss of coordination
- Addition of a new medication
- Removal of a medication

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/medicationsafety/adult_adversedrugsafety.html

² <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/QAPI/Downloads/Adverse-Drug-Event-Trigger-Tool.pdf>

³ <https://psnet.ahrq.gov/primer/medication-errors-and-adverse-drug-events>