

# Codeine Addiction, Withdrawal & Treatment

Codeine is the most widely used, naturally occurring narcotic in medical treatment in the world. It is an alkaloid that is found in opium in concentrations ranging from 0.7 to 2.5 percent. Most codeine used in the United States is produced from morphine, and is the starting material for not only codeine, but also dihydrocodeine and hydrocodone. Codeine is medically prescribed for relief of moderate pain and cough suppression, and compared with morphine; codeine produces less analgesia and respiratory depression. Codeine is usually ingested orally in pill form, however it can also be found in some liquid preparations (i.e. cough suppressants).

## **Products containing Codeine are:**

Tylenol with codeine, Codalgin, Nurofen Plus, Pirophen, Panadeine, Prescription and over the counter codeine cough syrups

## **Effects of Codeine**

Codeine is quite similar to hydrocodone and as with hydrocodone, is often abused for its opiate effects. It provides more than pain relief, and often leaves users with a feeling of euphoria. Use of codeine can lead to confusion, shallow breathing and heartbeat, agitation, hallucinations, convulsions and more.

## **Lasting/Long-Term Effects**

Continued codeine use can lead to addiction and dependency on the drug. Over time, the user develops a tolerance to the drug, and must increase the amount ingested in order to produce the same effects. Continued use can also cause the brain to slow and in some cases stop endorphin production, which can cause severe pain. Eventually, codeine addicts can experience high blood pressure, nausea, liver damage, stomach ulcers and more over a prolonged period of use.