

## HEALTH

# This is How Serious the Opioid Crisis Has Become

NewsUSA

(NU) - Lest there be any doubt that we're in the midst of an opioid abuse crisis, September has been declared "Drug-Free Pain Management Awareness Month."

Emphasis on "drug-free."

Lost in the headlines over the sheer number of deaths from overdoses of the drugs – more than 90 Americans each day – is how all too many patients' downward spiral began with what must have seemed like a routine initial doctor's prescription for painkillers like OxyContin.

"It's become a sadly common story," NPR reported. "People get prescribed painkillers. They become addicted. And then they seek out cheaper and more potent drugs like heroin and synthetic opioids."

That the September designation comes from the Foundation for Chiropractic Progress, and is included on the SHSMD/American Hospital Association's Calendar of Health Observances & Recognition Days, makes perfect sense.

Many health experts have long backed a "chiropractic-first" approach – arguing that it was an effective, safer way of addressing many patients' spine and joint-related pain. Still others got on board after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention last year finally began urging physicians to use al-



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ternatives to opioids and the American College of Physicians recommended spinal manipulation.

The month-long series of nationwide events – open to the public, state legislators, and healthcare professionals – will highlight the value of chiropractic for seniors, athletes, pregnant women, military veterans, and other pain sufferers.

"I'm living proof that chiropractic works," said Ret. Brig. Gen. Becky Halstead, who made history as the first female graduate of West Point (1981) to be promoted to General Officer. Halstead, the events' honorary chairperson, credits her own chiropractor for finally relieving the pain from her chronic fibromyalgia.

For more information, visit [www.drugfreepaincare.org](http://www.drugfreepaincare.org).