

# Alzheimer's therapy may help overcome opioid addiction

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Clinical trial results reveal that a medication used to treat Alzheimer's disease may also be an effective therapy for individuals addicted to opioids. The findings are published in *The American Journal on Addictions*.

The [medication](#), called galantamine, is thought to have a dual mechanism of action—it increases levels of a chemical messenger called acetylcholine in the brain and also binds to [nicotinic receptors](#), which play a role in addiction to nicotine and other substances.

Participants who took galantamine had fewer urine samples that were positive for opioids compared with those who took placebo, which corroborated with self-reported abstinence in those who took galantamine. Also, participants who used opioids during follow-up took longer to do so if they were in the galantamine group.

"My colleagues and I are excited about these preliminary findings, as they could point to new strategies for helping those with [opioid use disorder](#). We hope to pursue this in future research," said lead author Kathleen Carroll, Ph.D., of the Yale University School of Medicine.

**More information:** *American Journal on Addictions* (2019). [DOI: 10.1111/ajad.12904](https://doi.org/10.1111/ajad.12904)

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