



# “Russian Doll” Actress Natasha Lyonne Talks Addiction, Recovery and Hep C

In an interview with New York magazine’s The Cut, the actress revealed her difficult real-life inspirations for her new hit show.

April 9, 2019 By [Casey Halter](#)

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Anyone with a Netflix subscription has probably heard about the streaming service’s new breakout hit Russian Doll, a dark comedy created by and starring Orange Is the New Black alumna Natasha Lyonne. [A new profile](#) of the actress on New York magazine’s blog The Cut offers a glimpse into her past history with addiction, recovery and hepatitis C virus (HCV).

Lyonne, who turned 40 this month, is no stranger to sharing her story. After beginning her acting career at age 6, Lyonne became somewhat notorious for her antics in New York City, covered breathlessly by gossip blogs. She eventually dropped out of showbiz and in 2005 wound up in the hospital with hepatitis C, a heroin addiction and a collapsed lung.

Lyonne brought this past to life in Netflix’s Orange Is the New Black as inmate Nicky Nichols, a woman addicted to heroin. The actress famously bared her own real scar in a scene in the dramedy, telling critics she was excited to see and play a realistic character facing addiction on television.

Now, with Russian Doll, it appears Lyonne is once again drawing from real life (albeit a bit more symbolically)-portraying a woman forced to live and relive the day of her death over and over again. As writer Lauren Oyler points out in the profile, the upsetting cycle of death and rebirth mirrors the highs and lows of addiction, while alluding to the continuous near-death experiences drug users often face.

“Those are the same years I spent developing something to say” Lyonne told The Cut. “Having such a specific experience enabled me to have a specific point of view, even though it was a nightmare getting through so much of it.”

To read the full interview, [click here](#).

Then, [click here](#) to read another story about hepatitis C, addiction, and recovery.

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