



Do you know the facts about **OPIOID PAIN MEDICATIONS?**

WHAT IS AN OPIOID?

An opioid is a strong prescription medication, often prescribed to help relieve pain. Potential side effects of opioids include nausea, vomiting, sleepiness, dizziness, and/or constipation.

Common names of opioids:

- Hydrocodone (Vicodin, Norco)
- Oxycodone (Percocet, OxyContin)
- Morphine
- Codeine (Tylenol #3, Tylenol #4)
- Fentanyl
- Tramadol (Ultram)
- Methadone
- Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)
- Oxymorphone (Opana)

Only use your opioids for the reason that they were prescribed.

USING OPIOIDS SAFELY

- Ask your surgeon if you can take over-the-counter pain medication such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen as an alternative to opioids.
- Use your opioid prescription only if you still have severe pain that cannot be controlled by over the counter medications (or other non-opioid prescriptions).
- Make sure your doctor is informed of any current prescriptions you are taking including benzodiazepines like Valium, Xanax, or Ativan.
- Do not mix opioids with alcohol or other medications that can cause drowsiness.
- As your pain gets better, wait longer between taking your prescribed opioid dosage.
- Only use your opioids for your surgical pain. Do not use your pills for other reasons.
- Your opioid prescription was prescribed to YOU. Do not share your pills with others.

THE FACTS: OPIOID ADDICTION

You are at higher risk of developing a dependence or an addiction to opioids if you:

- Have a history of depression or anxiety.
- Have a history of using or abusing alcohol, tobacco or drugs (including prescription or street drugs).
- Have a history of long term (chronic) pain.
- Take opioids for longer than a week.
- Take more pills, more often, than your doctor prescribed.

Opioid use puts you at risk of dependence, addiction or overdose!

YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM
Ask questions and know the facts before using opioids for your pain.

UNDERSTANDING PAIN GOALS AFTER SURGERY

Our goal is to control your pain enough to do the things you need to do to heal: walk, sleep, eat and breath deeply.

Things to know:

- Pain after surgery is normal.
- Everyone feels pain differently.
- Pain is usually worse for the first 2 to 3 days after surgery.
- Most patients report using less than half of their opioid pills; many patients do not use any of their pills!

Other methods for pain relief:

- Relaxation, meditation, and music can help control your pain.
- Talk to your doctor if your pain is not controlled.

Surgeon: _____

Phone Number: _____

SAFELY STORE YOUR OPIOIDS + DISPOSE OF ANY UNUSED PILLS!

Safely store opioids out of reach of infants, children, teens and pets.

- Lock up your pills, if possible.
- Try to keep a count of how many pills you have left.
- Do not store your opioids in places that allow easy access to your pills (i.e. bathrooms, kitchens).

SAFELY dispose of unused opioids:

- Medication Take-Back Drives
- Pharmacy and police station drop boxes
- Mix drugs (do not crush) with used coffee grounds or kitty litter in a plastic bag, then throw away.

To find a list of local places that will take back your unused opioids, visit:

<https://apps.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/pubdispsearch>