

WHAT ARE OPIOID MEDICATIONS?

Prescription opioids are prescribed to treat severe pain. They also have potential risks and side effects. Common types are oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Norco), morphine, and methadone.

WHAT IS OPIOID MISUSE?

Taking medication in a manner or dose other than prescribed; using someone else's prescription even for legitimate reasons like pain, and using it for illegal purposes

RISKS OF OPIOIDS

Common side effects: Constipation, drowsiness, dizziness, and nausea

Risks: Tolerance, physical dependence, and overdose

- Tolerance- needing more medication for the same pain relief.
- Physical dependence- having physical symptoms of withdrawal when the medication is stopped.
This may even occur within two weeks of taking the medication.
- Overdose: slow breathing, unresponsiveness, and slow heart rate
 - **Call 911 in case of these symptoms**
 - Ask your doctor or pharmacist about naloxone to reduce this risk.

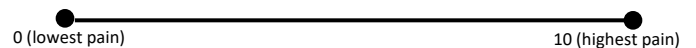


SAFE OPIOID USE PRACTICES

- Take only as prescribed by provider
- Use only for extreme pain
- Take alternate pain medications first, if recommended
- Do not use unless prescribed by a doctor

SELF-MONITORING OF PAIN

- Use pain scales to record severe pain (7 and up) and take rescue medication as prescribed if needed



- Record when you take the medication for severe pain each day

SAFE STORAGE AND DISPOSAL

- Store medication in a location not easily accessed by others, ideally locked or hidden
- Return remaining medication to disposal boxes in hospitals/pharmacies or at medication take back programs



For more information please refer to the following CDC websites:

Opioids:

<https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/opioids/index.html>

Helpful materials for patients:

<https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/patients/materials.html>

- For pharmacists: When using this handout, integrating it in the consult and referring to it as you educate the patient is recommended. Giving this to the patient with medications would be beneficial too.
- For patients: For questions or concerns about your medications, please contact your pharmacist or doctor.