

# Know the Facts and Risks of Opioid Medications

## What is an Opioid?

An opioid is a strong prescription pain medication. Some possible side effects 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 they were prescribed. Please discuss with your provider or pharmacist if you are pregnant and considering opioid use. Diversion (sharing or selling) of opioids is considered a felony.**



## Know the Facts About 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 provider prescribed.

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

## Using Opioids Safely

Ask your provider if it is okay to use over-the-counter acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil).

- Use your opioids if you still have severe pain that is not controlled with over-the-counter medications or other nonopioid prescriptions.
- Let your provider know if you are currently taking any benzodiazepines (i.e. Valium, Xanax).
- Do not mix opioids with alcohol or other medications that can cause drowsiness.
- As your pain gets better, wait longer between taking opioids.
- Do not use your pills for other reasons.
- Your opioids are only for you. Do not share your pills with others.

## Pain Goals After a Medical Procedure

The goal is to manage your pain to a comfortable level. Things to know:

- Pain after a procedure is normal.
- Everyone feels pain differently.
- Pain is usually worse for the first three days after a procedure.
- Speak to your provider about a non-opioid pain solution.

Other things to try for pain relief:

- Rest, relaxation, meditation, massage and music can help control your pain.
- Talk to your provider if your pain is not tolerable.



## Safely Store Your Opioids and Dispose of Any Unused Pills

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

- Lock 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:

[www.DisposeMyMeds.org](http://www.DisposeMyMeds.org)

***If you have concerns that you are developing a dependence on your opioid medication, please contact your doctor to discuss what options are best for you. You may also find programs and treatments available in your area by calling the Indiana Addiction Hotline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357).***

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