

# What I should know about opioid pain medicine



## WHAT IS AN OPIOID?

Opioids are strong pain medicines that are used to treat moderate to severe pain when other pain medications have not worked.

### Common Pain Medications

- Aspirin
- Tylenol
- Ibuprofen
- Aleve
- Gabapentin
- Lyrica
- Lidocaine



### Opioid Medications\*

- **Phenergan with codeine** cough medicines
- **Norco** hydrocodone with acetaminophen
- **Percocet** oxycodone with acetaminophen
- **Tylenol #3** acetaminophen with codeine
- **MS Contin** morphine
- **Oxycontin** oxycodone
- **Ultram** tramadol
- **Pain patches** fentanyl
- **Dilaudid** hydromorphone



### Signs of an Overdose



**Seek immediate medical attention if you experience:**

- Severe dizziness
- Inability to stay awake
- Hallucinations
- Heavy or unusual snoring
- Slow breathing

\*Opioids are also referred to as "opiates" or "narcotics."

### Do Not Use While Taking Opioids\*\*

\*\*Unless specifically advised by your doctor

SUBSTANCES	EXAMPLES
<b>Alcohol</b>	Beer, Wine, Liquor
<b>Anti-Anxiety Pills</b>	Xanax or Valium
<b>Muscle Relaxants</b>	Soma or Flexeril
<b>Sleep Aids</b>	Ambien or Lunesta



- Slow or no heartbeat
- Aren't breathing
- Cannot be woken up
- Lips or fingernails are blue
- Can't speak clearly
- While asleep making gasping, gurgling, or snorting sounds

# What I should know about opioid pain medicine



## Common Side Effects



Dizziness, drowsiness



Low blood pressure upon standing



Dry mouth



Itching & sweating



Low sex hormones, low energy



Constipation, nausea, vomiting

## Important Things to Know

- Use opioid medicines **AS NEEDED AND DIRECTED** only
- If taken for more than 2 weeks, speak with your doctor for a plan to stop
- **NEVER** take more than prescribed
- **DO NOT DRIVE** until you know how the medication affects you
- **NEVER** take someone else's medicine
- **NEVER** sell or share your medicine

**Talk to your provider about any concerns or questions you have about how to take your medication.**

## Factors that Increase Risks of Dangerous Side Effects

- Are age 65 or older
- Sleep apnea, COPD, asthma, kidney or liver problems
- First time opioid users
- High dose of opioids
- Currently taking medications for anxiety or sleep
- Have a history of problems with alcohol or other substances

## Anti-Overdose Medication

- If you are taking opioid medicines, ask your doctor about Naloxone, a medicine that can temporarily reverse overdose and prevent death.
- If you are unsure if an opioid is causing symptoms, still give Naloxone as it is not known to cause any harm in non-opioid overdose.
- Immediate medical attention is required even if Naloxone is administered.

If you or someone you know are struggling with addiction, tell your doctor or call the **National Helpline** at **1-800-662-4357**.

## POTENTIAL RISKS

**Tolerance:** need a higher dose to get the same pain relief effect

**Dependence:** withdrawal symptoms if stopped abruptly

**Withdrawal symptoms:** pain, aches, sweating, nausea, vomiting, trouble sleeping

**Addiction:** dependence with abusive pleasure seeking behavior



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