

Opioid Medication Safety



Examples of OPIOID medications include codeine (Tylenol #3), hydromorphone (Dilaudid), morphine, hydrocodone (Norco), and oxycodone (Percocet, Oxycontin)

It is the patient's responsibility to always follow these important safety tips:

- Take Opioid pain medication only as directed.
 - **Do not take an increased dose or take your medication more often than is prescribed by your healthcare provider.**
 - **Do not take medication that has not been prescribed to you.**
- Notify OSS Health of any prior history of addiction or drug abuse. This will help us manage your pain effectively and safely.
- Inform OSS Health if you are under the care of a pain management physician or if you have a Controlled Substance Agreement or a Pain Contract with another healthcare provider.
- Notify OSS Health of any prescriptions you have received from other physicians. Do not use opioids with other medications unless approved by your healthcare provider.
 - OSS Health retrieves and reviews patients' medication histories from various sources, including but not limited to, state and national databases, pharmacies, and other providers.
- **Keep your medications in a safe, secure place at all times.** Keep out of reach of children and pets.

Opioid Pain Medication Side Effects

Commonly occurring side effects include:

- Constipation
 - Be to drink plenty of fluids and include a diet full of fruits and vegetables. A stool softener or laxative may be prescribed by your healthcare provider to alleviate this side effect.
- Nausea
 - Take medication with food.
- Sedation
 - Do not drive or operate heavy machinery until you know how your prescription will affect you.
 - **WARNING: If a patient experiences difficulty breathing or is unable to be awakened, call 911 immediately.**

Medication Disposal

- Do **NOT** give your medication to friends or family. Doctors prescribe medications based on your specific medical history and diagnosis. Medications prescribed to you may be dangerous for someone else.
- Do **NOT** keep leftover medication in your house for future use. Medications prescribed for one condition may not be the ideal medication for another condition.
- Properly dispose of any leftover medication **immediately** by utilizing the following method:
 - Mix medications (do **NOT** crush tablets or capsules) with an unpalatable substance such as dirt, kitty litter or used coffee grounds. Place the mixture in a container such as a sealable plastic bag, empty can or other container and throw the container in your household trash.
 - Alternatively, please consult the website listed below to find a medication disposal box located nearest you. Medications returned to these locations may remain in their original containers.
 - www.ddap.pa.gov Click on “Find a Drug Take-Back Location”

OSS Health’s Policy

- As a reminder, opioid pain medication prescriptions will be limited to the **shortest duration possible** in accordance with your care plan. Neither the on-call physician nor OSS Health Urgent Care will refill on-going prescriptions. Please coordinate all refills with your current OSS Health physician. ***Please note: medication refills are NOT guaranteed.***
- Pain that is felt to be unrelated to the condition being treated by your OSS Health Care team will NOT be managed by OSS. Typically, this is managed by your primary care physician or a pain management specialist.
- The OSS Health team believes that non-pharmacologic pain relievers can also aid in the recovery process. Examples of non-pharmacologic pain relievers include rest, ice application, heat application, gentle massage, and exercise. Your provider may recommend non-pharmacologic treatments to best manage your pain.

Naloxone

Naloxone is a medication that is used to treat an opioid overdose. It may be sprayed inside your nose or injected into your body. Naloxone can be used if you or someone else that has taken opioid medication and is having trouble breathing, is short of breath, or is unusually sleepy. If any of these symptoms occur, use naloxone if it is available to you and call 911 or

go to the emergency room immediately. Naloxone is never a substitute for emergency medical care. Always call 911 or go to the emergency room if you have used or given naloxone.

If your provider feels that an opioid overdose is a high risk for you, they may prescribe naloxone. Otherwise, naloxone is available to anyone in pharmacies as an over-the-counter medication in Pennsylvania.

Read all patient information that comes with naloxone and ask your pharmacist if you have any questions. Tell your family about your naloxone and keep in a place where they can access it in an emergency.