

Let's Talk About Pain Medicines

Don't let people take your opioid medicine

Most people who don't use opioid medicines correctly start out by using medicines they found at home! This includes young adults. Store your medicines so your kids, their friends and other people cannot get them.

Talk to your kids about how dangerous opioid medicines can be. If you use opioid medicines incorrectly, they can be as dangerous as heroin.

Keep your opioid medicines in original bottles or containers.

- Do not mix them with your other medicines. You can pull out enough to put in a weekly pill box.
- Always know how many pills you should have. Make sure no pills are missing.

Keep opioid medicines in a safe location.

- Keep medicines where kids and other people can't see them.
 - Use a lock box or locked drawer. Hide the key.
 - Do not leave opioid medicine on countertops, tables or nightstands.
 - Do not put opioid medicine in your purse or bag.
 - Do not keep opioid medicine in the bathroom.



Sometimes an opioid medicine is the best way to stop your pain. Always take opioid medicine exactly how your doctor or pharmacist tells you. Ask if you have any questions! Tell them if your pain does not stop or if you have side effects.



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Get rid of unused opioid medicines

Make sure kids and other people don't use your medicine.

Get your unused opioid medicine out of your house as soon as you stop taking them. This can stop your kids, their friends and other adults from taking them.

Most kids who use heroin started using opioid medicines they found at home.

Here is how to get rid of your unused opioid medicines:

- Ask your pharmacist. Your pharmacist can tell you how to get rid of unused medicines.
- If the pharmacy can't take your medicine, some police stations, hospitals and clinics can.
- The instructions that come with your opioid medicine might tell you how to get rid of them.
- Learn more at the Food and Drug Administration's website: bit.ly/DiscardDrugs
- Participate in the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day: Two times a year, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) plans a day where you can bring your unused prescriptions to specific locations. Check for a location near you: bit.ly/TakeBackDrugs.

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What can go wrong when you use opioid medicines?

You could die: In 2016, more people in Wisconsin died from opioid overdoses than in car crashes. Many of the people died because they did not use opioid medicine correctly. More people overdose from opioid medicine than from heroin and cocaine. Always take your opioid medicine how your doctor or pharmacist told you. If you don't:

You could have trouble breathing: If you take opioid medicine incorrectly, your breathing can be slower. You can even stop breathing.

You could go into a coma: This means that nothing can wake you up.

You could overdose: This means you took too much medicine. This can make you very sick. It can also kill you.

You can get addicted: Opioid medicine can be as addictive as heroin. This makes it hard to stay away from the medicine.

Your behavior could change. People who are addicted to opioid medicines might steal medicines from a person they care about, get them from a friend or buy them from an illegal dealer. Some people visit different doctors and fill them at different pharmacies.



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Let's Talk About Pain Medicines

How are prescription opioids and other pain medicines different?

Prescription opioids:

- Work in the brain to block pain signals
- Need a doctor's note (prescription) to buy them
- Give you a very good feeling when you first take them
- Can be addictive. If you are addicted, you start to:
 - feel a strong need to take the medicine
 - need to take more to get the same good feelings
 - can throw up, get chills, have diarrhea, not sleep, or have other bad effects if you stop taking the medicine



Names of some prescription opioids:

- Hydrocodone (Vicodin[®], Lortab[®], Lorcet[®])
- Tramadol (Ultram)
- Oxycodone (OxyContin[®], Percodan[®], Percocet[®])
- Morphine (Kadian[®], Avinza[®], MS Contin[®])
- Codeine
- Fentanyl (Duragesic[®])

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Other Pain Medicines:

- Most work in the part of your body where you feel the pain (not your brain)
- Many need a doctor's note (prescription)
- Most are not addictive

Names of some other medicines:

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol[®])
- Ibuprofen (Advil[®], Motrin[®])
- Naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn[®])
- Pregabalin (Lyrica[®])*
- Duloxetine (Cymbalta[®])*
- Gabapentin (Neurontin[®])*
- Meloxicam (Mobic[®])*

* needs a prescription



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