



Do's and Don'ts of Pain Medicines



These tips can help you or anyone know to safely use opioid pain medicines.

DO

Know your medicines: Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about HOW and WHY you take each medicine.

DO

Know the signs of overdose: Ask others in your home to help you watch out for:

- slurred speech
- confusion
- difficulty staying awake
- dizziness
- vomiting
- trouble breathing
- pale or clammy skin

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about naloxone, a medicine to treat opioid overdose.

DO

Store your medicines safely: Keep them in the original, labeled packaging where others can't access them. Dispose of old or unused medicines.

DO

Tell every member of your health care team: Bring all of your medicines to every doctor or hospital visit so they can be reviewed.

DON'T

Don't take any medicine that was not prescribed to you, and don't share your medicine with others.

DON'T

Don't take any medicine left over from an earlier treatment.

DON'T

Don't change the dose or how often you take your medicines without talking to your doctor.

DON'T

Don't take pain medicines with alcohol or other drugs, and don't take them with other medicines without checking with your doctor.

Glossary:

Opioid – A “narcotic” pain medicine that reduces the feeling of pain

Overdose – Your body's response to too much medicine, can be deadly

Medicine disposal – Throw away medicines in the trash or talk to your pharmacist about other disposal options