



TREATING PAIN

What you should know

Living with severe or constant pain is hard. It can impact all areas of your life, and all you want is relief. We understand that. We can't promise to make the pain go away completely, but we will do our best to manage your pain so that you can live your life.

Key considerations

In some cases, prescription pain relievers, or opioids (oxycontin, oxycodone, codeine and hydrocodone, for example) can be an important part of treatment. Doctors often give them to treat severe pain from surgery or a serious injury, or pain that results from health conditions like chronic back pain. But while these drugs may help relieve pain, they also have serious risks, including dependence, addiction, accidental overdose, and even death.

To help protect you from these risks, we will work together with you to determine if an opioid prescription is the right fit for you. It's important that we talk about:

- › Pain treatment options, such as physical, occupational, and behavioral therapies that don't include prescription drugs
- › Other prescribed medications that you may be taking
- › Your past or current drug and alcohol use
- › Possible risks and benefits of taking prescription opioids
- › Setting realistic goals for managing your pain

We're here to help.

Opioid addiction can impact anyone. If you think you are becoming dependent or may be addicted, tell us immediately. We can help connect you to the resources you need.



Why talking is important

For most people, when opioids are taken as directed for a short time, they reduce pain and are safe. But some people may start to depend on them or become addicted. That's why we want to get to know you. We will ask questions and we will listen to you. Then we will share all of your options, how they work, and possible side effects. We want to provide the safest and most effective care. But we can only do that by working together to decide on the best treatment. And by continuing to talk about any side effects, symptoms, or concerns you may have.

Other important information

Store your medications in a child-resistant bottle and in one safe location where it cannot be easily accessed by a child, pet, or others. Share details about your prescription(s) only with a caregiver or others that need to know.

Dispose of any unused medicines to avoid unnecessary health risks in your home, especially if there are children present. To do so:

- › Ask your pharmacist if they know of disposal programs in your area
- › Visit the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) website (www.dea.gov) and search for a drug disposal area
- › Call the DEA at **800.882.9539** and ask for the location of an authorized collector in your community

For more information about opioid use, check out the CDC fact sheet at <http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdf/aha-patient-opioid-factsheet-a.pdf>, or visit <http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/prescribing/patients.html>

Alternative therapies

Your health plan may have programs available to help you address chronic pain or substance use disorders and help you reach your health goals.

Therapies that may be covered or offered at a discount through your medical insurance include:

- › Occupational therapy
- › Physical therapy
- › Acupuncture
- › Chiropractic care
- › Behavioral health treatment, such as stress management or treatment for depression

Refer to your policy for details.

You may want to consider other options

These may include over-the-counter remedies such as pain relievers, ice and heat therapy, supplements, herbs, an exercise regimen, or massage.

Talk to us. We want to be sure the care you receive meets your needs.