

Medication Record

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
12:00 AM							
1:00 AM							
2:00 AM							
3:00 AM							
4:00 AM							
5:00 AM							
6:00 AM							
7:00 AM							
8:00 AM							
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11:00 PM							

Opioid Pain Medications

**Important Facts For
Patients, Families and
Caregivers**



Artwork by Kristin Otwell

You have been prescribed an opioid medication by your doctor.

This may be after you have had a recent surgery or an acute injury.

Read, understand, and talk with your family, caregiver(s), and healthcare professional about your medication and the information in this pamphlet. Ask questions to help inform yourself and your family about this important topic and your health!

- ◆ An opioid pain medicine is also called a narcotic. It is used to help manage ACUTE pain, which means pain that is very strong and is new to you.
- ◆ Opioid medications are highly addictive.
- ◆ You will need to talk clearly and closely with your healthcare professional about how much and how long you should take this medication.
- ◆ You should use the lowest possible dose, for the shortest amount of time.
- ◆ You need to avoid alcohol, sleep aids and tranquilizers (like Trazodone, Valium, Ativan, Xanax, etc.) while taking opioids, ***except under the direct instructions and follow-up care of your health care professional.***

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

- ◆ “Staying ahead of the pain” with strong medication in the hospital is appropriate only for the very first stages of your healing. Expect SOME pain as you heal; it’s normal.
- ◆ Ask your health care professional how to wean off (“titrate”) the opioid medicine: **increase** the time between your doses and **decrease** the amount of the dose. This is most often done gradually and steadily.
- ◆ You can make a decreasing plan with your healthcare provider. A daily chart can help you keep track as you consistently increase the time between doses and decrease the amount of your dose, usually over a week or two.
- ◆ Some people may have more pain when taking opioids, rather than less.

There is a sample recording page on the back of this pamphlet. You can copy and use it to keep track of your medication doses, especially while weaning off them with the help of your health care professional.



Pain can usually be managed with options other than opioids.

The following choices are not habit-forming and can relieve your pain more safely than opioids. Work with your doctor or healthcare professional to make use of these methods of dealing with pain, in place of opioids:

- ◆ Chiropractic
- ◆ Acupuncture
- ◆ Over-the-counter pain relievers
- ◆ Other prescription drugs that do not cause dependence
- ◆ Breathing techniques
- ◆ Meditation/Mindfulness/Relaxation
- ◆ Physical therapy
- ◆ Exercise
- ◆ Massage or other bodywork
- ◆ Hypnosis

It takes strong teamwork and follow-through to help control your pain wisely. Your doctor or healthcare professional can give you support and ideas to successfully manage your pain as safely as possible.

Visit us for more information at:
www.SafeRxMendocino.com