



## Using Opioids information

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A study posted in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* in March, 2018 revealed that *“opioid-based pain pills like morphine and oxycodone aren’t any better at treating some chronic pain than over-the-counter drugs like Tylenol or Advil.”* The non-opioid group reported less pain.

If you have questions you may contact the Emergency Room or call your provider that prescribed your opioid pain medication :

Facility

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## Information Regarding your opioid prescription

Your physician has given you a prescription for an opioid and wants you to understand the long-term effects from taking opioids and some alternatives to opioid use.

### Short-Term Effects

- Feelings of intense excitement and happiness
- Pain Relief
- Feeling sleepy
- Causes you to sleep

### Side Effects

- Feeling sleepy
- Lack of energy
- Lose touch with what is real
- Difficulty breathing
- Nausea

### Long-Term Effects

- Nausea and vomiting
- Abdominal distention and bloating
- Constipation
- Liver damage
- Brain damage
- Drug Addiction
- Death

## Alternatives to Opioids

Other options to use opioids include:

- Ibuprofen, naproxen or aspirin
- Tylenol
- Anti-depressants-Tofranil, Pamelor, Norpramin or Elavil

### Non-drug treatments

Exercise, physical therapy, yoga, acupuncture, cognitive behavioral therapy, biofeedback, chiropractic, and relaxation training can provide pain relief, especially for chronic pain.

### Corticosteroids

Commonly referred to as just steroids, decrease inflammation and reduce the activity of the immune system. They can reduce swelling and pain for conditions like cancer, back injuries, arthritis, joint pain and nerve pain. Common steroids used for pain relief are dexamethasone, prednisone and prednisolone.

### Anti-epileptic medications

Can be taken to address chronic nerve pain and chronic pain from conditions like diabetes, shingles, chemotherapy, herniated disks and fibromyalgia. These include drugs such as gabapentin (Neurontin) and pregabalin (Lyrica), carbamazepine (Tegretol) and phenytoin (Dilantin).

## Indications for Opioid Use

- Acute pain after surgery
- Injury or trauma (except head injury)
- Cancer pain
- Pain arising from a severe, chronic and disabling diseases such as the degenerative condition rheumatoid arthritis.
- Anesthesia which facilitates surgery and manipulation.
- De-Addiction—Some opioids such as methadone and buprenorphine are used to help wean patients off some of the more potent opioids such as heroin. Methadone is given in low doses after stopping heroin to reduce dependency on the opioid but without causing severe withdrawal symptoms.