

Pain Medicine Instructions

How can pain medicine affect me?

You were given a prescription for pain medicine. This medicine may make you tired or drowsy and may affect your ability to think clearly. Pain medicine may also affect your ability to drive or perform certain physical activities. It may not be possible to make all of your pain go away, but you should be comfortable enough to move, breathe, and take care of yourself.

How often should I take pain medicine and how much should I take?

- Take pain medicine only as directed by your health care provider and only as needed for pain.
- You do not need to take pain medicine if you are not having pain, unless directed by your health care provider.
- You can take less than the prescribed dose if you find that a smaller amount of medicine controls your pain.



What restrictions do I have while taking pain medicine?

Follow these instructions after you start taking pain medicine, while you are taking the medicine, and for 8 hours after you stop taking the medicine:

- **Do not** drive.
- **Do not** operate machinery.
- **Do not** operate power tools.
- **Do not** sign legal documents.
- **Do not** drink alcohol.
- **Do not** take sleeping pills.
- **Do not** supervise children by yourself.
- **Do not** participate in activities that require climbing or being in high places.
- **Do not** enter a body of water—such as a lake, river, ocean, spa, or swimming pool—without an adult nearby who can monitor and help you.

How can I keep others safe while I am taking pain medicine?

- Store your pain medicine as directed by your health care provider. Make sure that it is placed where children and pets cannot reach it.
- **Never** share your pain medicine with anyone.
- **Do not** save any leftover pills. If you have any leftover pain medicine, get rid of it or destroy it as directed by your health care provider.

What else do I need to know about taking pain medicine?

- Use a stool softener if you become constipated from your pain medicine. Increasing your intake of fruits and vegetables will also help with constipation.
- Write down the times when you take your pain medicine. Look at the times before you take your next dose of medicine. It is easy to become confused while on pain medicine. Recording the times helps you to avoid an overdose.

- If your pain is severe, **do not** try to treat it yourself by taking more pills than instructed on your prescription. Contact your health care provider for help.
- You may have been prescribed a pain medicine that contains acetaminophen. **Do not** take any other acetaminophen while taking this medicine. An overdose of acetaminophen can result in severe liver damage. Acetaminophen is found in many over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription medicines. If you are taking any medicines in addition to your pain medicine, check the active ingredients on those medicines to see if acetaminophen is listed.

When should I call my health care provider?

- Your medicine is not helping to make the pain go away.
- You vomit or have diarrhea shortly after taking the medicine.
- You develop new pain in areas that did not hurt before.
- You have an allergic reaction to your medicine. This may include:
 - Itchiness.
 - Swelling.
 - Dizziness.
 - Developing a new rash.

When should I call 911 or go to the emergency room?

- You feel dizzy or you faint.
- You are very confused or disoriented.
- You repeatedly vomit.
- Your skin or lips turn pale or bluish in color.
- You have shortness of breath or you are breathing much more slowly than usual.
- You have a severe allergic reaction to your medicine. This includes:
 - Developing tongue swelling.
 - Having difficulty breathing.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.