

MEDICATION

Pain Reliever: Opioids



What are opioids?

In the context of healthcare, opioids are prescription medications used to help relieve severe pain. These medications are often referred to as narcotics.

When are these medications used?

Opioids are often prescribed after a surgery, injury, or when other pain medications have not worked.

How often should I take this medication?

Take these medications only as directed by your doctor. Do not take them more often and do not take them for a longer time than your doctor prescribed.

What side effects can I experience with opioids?

Opioids may lead to side effects in some patients. These side effects include:

- Constipation • Difficulty breathing • Nausea
- Vomiting • Sleepiness and dizziness • Confusion
- Depression • Increased sensitivity to pain

Should I do anything differently if I am taking an opioid medication?

It is important to avoid alcohol while taking opioid medications. Drinking alcohol will increase your risk of side effects.

Can I continue taking opioids for a long time?

Prescription opioids carry serious risks of addiction and overdose, especially with prolonged use. If too much of an opioid medication is taken for a long time, it may cause physical dependence. This means a person can experience withdrawal symptoms when the medication is stopped.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS INCLUDE:

Morphine	Hydromorphone (Dilaudid®)
Hydrocodone (Vicodin®)	Tramadol (Ultram®)
Oxycodone (Oxycontin®)	