



Medicine Instructions

For patients being discharged

Please take ALL medicines as prescribed.

You may start taking all medicines you were taking before your procedure or hospital stay, unless your health care provider tells you otherwise.

Some pain medicines should be taken on a regular schedule. Others are taken “as needed,” which means you should take them when you first begin to feel pain so that you “stay on top” or “stay ahead” of the pain.

Type of Medicine	Name of Medicine	How Much to Take	How Often to Take It	Time of Last Dose
Anti-inflammatory				
Stool Softener				
Anti-nausea				
Pain				

About Opioid Pain Medicines

How much medicine should I take?

Follow the instructions on the container. If your pain is not relieved, talk with your health care provider about changes in your medicine to control your pain.

How long does it take the medicine to start working and how long will the effect last?

- *Immediate-acting* medicines start working in about 30 minutes and last about 4 hours. Examples are hydromorphone, oxycodone, and morphine.
- *Slow-release (SR)* medicines start working in about 60 minutes and last 8 to 12 hours. Examples of slow-release medicines are morphine SR and oxycotin. Do **not** crush or chew these medicines. Swallow them whole.

Questions?

Call 9-1-1 or go to the emergency room if you have:

- **Difficulty breathing.**
- **A rash.**
- **Severe nausea.**
- **Vomiting.**

Call your doctor or health care provider if you have other questions or concerns.

Clinic: _____

Hours: _____

206-598- _____

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206-598-6190 and ask for the fellow or resident on call for your procedure to be paged.

What are the common side effects caused by pain medicines? How can I avoid them?

Constipation: To prevent constipation, drink plenty of water and take a stool softener such as docusate (Colace). If you become constipated, use a laxative such as senna or milk of magnesia. If the problem continues, contact your health care provider.

Drowsiness: Avoid alcohol and other medicines that make you sleepy because they will add to the drowsiness caused by the pain medicines. Do not drive or use machinery while you are on pain medicine.

Nausea: Take pain medicine with food if you are having trouble with upset stomach.

How do I get a refill of my pain medicine?

Many opioid pain medicines require a new prescription each time you need a new supply. Your pharmacist will be able to tell you whether you can get refills of your pain medicine or if you must contact your provider for a new prescription.

Myths About Pain Medicines

- **“I might get addicted.”**

Some people are reluctant to take medicine for pain because they are afraid they will become addicted. Research has shown that this is not true. When pain medicines are used properly, patients rarely, if ever, become addicted to them.

- **“I’ll have terrible side effects.”**

Side effects like nausea, itching, sleepiness, or constipation can be taken care of by changing the medicine or dose, or by adding simple treatments.

- **“I don’t want to seem like a complainer.”**

You have a right to ask for pain relief. Also, your health care providers need to know about all of your symptoms, including pain, so that they can give you the care you need.

Pain Medicines Help the Healing Process

Be sure to let your health care provider know when your pain is not being well-controlled. Healing can be slower if your pain:

- Makes it hard for you to rest or sleep.
- Makes it hard for you to breathe deeply, cough, or walk.
- Causes you to lose your appetite.
- Makes you feel sad or anxious.

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