

Things you need to know...Opioid Fast Facts

If prescribed, Opioid pain medications (Opioids) are just one part of a total pain management plan. Expected benefits and goals include IMPROVED: (1) ability to engage in work, social, recreational and/or physical activities; (2) quality of life; and (3) pain.

Opioids often have side effects, which may include but are not limited to:

- Itching
- Rash
- Nausea
- Constipation, sometimes severe
- Trouble urinating or passing stool/poop
- Drowsiness
- Slow or depressed breathing (especially if obese)
- Problems thinking clearly
- Mood changes
- Depression getting worse
- Increased risk of bone fractures or brittle bones
- May worsen sleep apnea (periods of not breathing while sleeping)
- Sexual difficulties, such as lack of menstrual periods in women and low male hormone in men
- Life-threatening irregular heartbeat (methadone)

Taking too much Opioids OR using them with alcohol, illegal drugs, or some prescriptions (especially sedatives or anxiety medicines, such as Xanax® AND especially without supervision or your provider knowing) can cause:

- Overdose
- Harm to myself or others (i.e., car wreck)
- Trouble breathing, may stop breathing
- Brain damage, Coma, Death

Some Opioids also contain acetaminophen, a medication found in many OTC products (also called APAP, Tylenol®). Ask your doctor or pharmacist before taking OTC products because too much acetaminophen may damage your liver.

If an Opioid is stopped suddenly without medical supervision, it often makes you feel sick from physical withdrawal symptoms such as:

- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Aching, Pain
- Sweating
- Abdominal/stomach cramping
- Diarrhea

While on Opioids, you may develop an increased sensitivity to pain.

You could become addicted to Opioids and have a higher chance if you or a family member has ever had drug or alcohol problems. Addiction is associated with drug craving, loss of control, and poor response to treatment.

Secure and dispose of Opioids properly to lessen the risk: (1) of hurting children or others who accidentally take it; and (2) of theft, deceit, assault or abuse by persons seeking Opioids for purposes of misuse.

Funding provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Prevention for States Program

March 2017

Things you need to know...Opioid Fast Facts

If prescribed, Opioid pain medications (Opioids) are just one part of a total pain management plan. Expected benefits and goals include IMPROVED: (1) ability to engage in work, social, recreational and/or physical activities; (2) quality of life; and (3) pain.

Opioids often have side effects, which may include but are not limited to:

- Itching
- Rash
- Nausea
- Constipation, sometimes severe
- Trouble urinating or passing stool/poop
- Drowsiness
- Slow or depressed breathing (especially if obese)
- Problems thinking clearly
- Mood changes
- Depression getting worse
- Increased risk of bone fractures or brittle bones
- May worsen sleep apnea (periods of not breathing while sleeping)
- Sexual difficulties, such as lack of menstrual periods in women and low male hormone in men
- Life-threatening irregular heartbeat (methadone)

Taking too much Opioids OR using them with alcohol, illegal drugs, or some prescriptions (especially sedatives or anxiety medicines, such as Xanax® AND especially without supervision or your provider knowing) can cause:

- Overdose
- Harm to myself or others (i.e., car wreck)
- Trouble breathing, may stop breathing
- Brain damage, Coma, Death

Some Opioids also contain acetaminophen, a medication found in many OTC products (also called APAP, Tylenol®). Ask your doctor or pharmacist before taking OTC products because too much acetaminophen may damage your liver.

If an Opioid is stopped suddenly without medical supervision, it often makes you feel sick from physical withdrawal symptoms such as:

- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Aching, Pain
- Sweating
- Abdominal/stomach cramping
- Diarrhea

While on Opioids, you may develop an increased sensitivity to pain.

You could become addicted to Opioids and have a higher chance if you or a family member has ever had drug or alcohol problems. Addiction is associated with drug craving, loss of control, and poor response to treatment.

Secure and dispose of Opioids properly to lessen the risk: (1) of hurting children or others who accidentally take it; and (2) of theft, deceit, assault or abuse by persons seeking Opioids for purposes of misuse.

Funding provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Prevention for States Program

March 2017