



# So, you have been prescribed an opioid

## What is an opioid?

Opioids are a group of medicines that are used to treat moderate to severe pain. Some examples of opioids that are used in children and teens are morphine, hydromorphone and oxycodone. Illegal or street opioids are made in unsafe conditions and can be mixed with other dangerous things that can make you very sick. When opioids are prescribed to you by a doctor, they were made in a safe medical lab with strict quality control.

Sometimes children and teens need opioids. Opioids can be safe when used properly. Here are some ways to take them safely:

<b>1</b>	<b>Opioids are commonly combined with non-opioid pain medicine</b>	Take opioid pain medicine combined with another non-opioid pain reliever such as ibuprofen (Advil™ or Motrin™) or acetaminophen (Tylenol™). This is safe and allows most people to use less opioids, overall. If you are not sure about dosing of your medicines, ask a parent/caregiver to check it for you.
<b>2</b>	<b>Use opioids for a short time only</b>	Most times, you will need opioids for 3-5 days. Ask your pharmacist to split or hold your prescription if it is for longer than a few days.
<b>3</b>	<b>Watch out for side effects</b>	Opioids can cause constipation, nausea, drowsiness, or dizziness. Many of these side effects can be managed with over-the-counter medicines. Call your doctor or pharmacist if the side effects are bothering you. If you have difficulty breathing, seek medical attention immediately.
<b>4</b>	<b>Store the opioid safely</b>	Keep the opioid locked and out of reach of children, teens and pets. People and pets can get very sick if they take them by mistake.
<b>5</b>	<b>Never share opioids with anyone else</b>	You should be the only one to take the opioid and you should only take the recommended dose of the opioid for the reason you received it.
<b>6</b>	<b>Safely dispose of the opioid</b>	Once you no longer need an opioid pain medicine, bring the leftover medicine to your pharmacy. Do not throw it in the trash. Your pharmacist will safely dispose of any unused medication.



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[linktr.ee/youthinpain](https://linktr.ee/youthinpain)

## Your provider cares about you and is committed to managing your pain safely.

- Taking opioids prescribed to you for medical use is not “doing drugs”.
- The benefits are greater than the risks when opioids are being taken for proper medical reasons.
- There is no direct evidence that short-term opioid use is associated with later higher-risk use or addiction.
- Let your provider know if you or members of your family have a history of substance use.
- Talk to your doctor if you have fears about using this medicine.

## Taking opioids for medical reasons can be a safe way to manage your pain.

If your pain is poorly treated or untreated, there can be negative effects:

- You may have a slower healing time
- You are more likely to return to the hospital
- You are more likely to develop chronic pain

Taking opioid pain medicines can reduce your pain so that you can heal faster and get back to your normal activities. Follow your health care team’s advice about activities and any restrictions while taking opioid medicines.

Ask your pharmacist if you have any questions.

My provider’s phone #

My pharmacist’s phone #

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