

Safe and Effective Pain Management

Your surgical team's goal is to control your pain after surgery so you can do the things you need to do to heal: walk, eat, breathe deeply, and sleep.

TO DO:

Discuss your pain management plan with your healthcare provider.

They may suggest using a combination of strategies to control pain, such as:

- **Over-the-counter medications** - Pain can be well controlled with a schedule of over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil).
- **Opioid medications** - Your doctor may prescribe an opioid medication if you are still in a lot of pain after taking over-the-counter pain medicine. Feeling some pain after surgery is normal.
- **Mindfulness activities** - The suggested activities in the “*Creating a Positive Mindset*” section can be helpful and may provide better pain relief than medication alone.

What are opioids?

Opioids are strong prescription pain medications. Common opioids include:

Generic Name	Brand Name
Codeine	Tylenol® #3* or #4*
Fentanyl	Duragesic®
Hydrocodone	Vicodin®, Norco®*
Hydromorphone	Dilaudid®
Methadone	Methadose®
Morphine	MS Contin®, Kadian
Oxycodone	Percocet®, OxyContin®
Oxymorphone	Opana®
Tramadol	Ultram®, Ultracet®*

* Contains acetaminophen (Tylenol). Talk with your doctor if you're also taking acetaminophen separately.

What do I need to know about using opioids safely?

- Tell your doctor about all medications you currently take.
- As your pain gets better wait longer between taking opioids. Work with your healthcare team to determine the best plan for you.
- Only use the opioids for your surgical pain. Do not take opioids for other reasons
- Opioids can be addictive and may cause overdose if used incorrectly or abused.
- Talk with your doctor if you are having trouble managing your pain.



How do I store opioids safely?

- Store any medication safely in a locked cabinet, out of sight and out of reach of children.
- Keep a count of how many pills you have left.

How do I dispose of opioids safely?

- Dispose of any unused pills at an approved collector. Use a permanent medication drop box or take them to an authorized “Take-Back” program in your area.
- Use your household trash as a last resort. Mix it with something unappealing, like coffee grounds or kitty litter. Do not flush opioids down the toilet.

Learn more about medication disposal at:
<http://michmed.org/MmA6N>



Who can support me in safely managing my pain? How?
