



Knowing the Risks of Opioid Prescription Pain Medications

Opioid prescription pain medications are a type of medicine used to relieve pain. Some of the common names include oxycodone and acetaminophen (Percocet®); oxycodone, (OxyContin®); and hydrocodone and acetaminophen (Vicodin®).

These medications:

- ▶ Cause your brain to block the feeling of pain; they *do not* treat the underlying cause of pain;
- ▶ **Are very addictive**, especially if they are not used correctly;
- ▶ **Increase your chances of accidental overdose, coma, and death** if taken with prescription medications, including anti-anxiety and sedating medications, and alcohol.

Effective non-opioid options are available for relieving short-term pain, including ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), acetaminophen (Tylenol®), physical therapy, chiropractic, acupuncture, and cognitive behavioral therapy. Talk with your healthcare provider to learn more.

Proper Dosage

Opioids should only be taken as directed. Misuse and abuse of opioids can be illegal, extremely harmful, and even deadly.

- ▶ **Never share this prescription with anyone.**
- ▶ **Store out of reach of children – one dose can cause an accidental overdose.**
- ▶ **Do not increase dosage or take more often than directed by your healthcare provider.**

Dispose of Medicines Safely

- ▶ There are many locations in Rhode Island that offer safe disposal of prescription pain medications. For locations, visit: preventoverdoseri.org/get-rid-of-medicines
- ▶ If you cannot get to a drug disposal location, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends flushing opioid prescription pain medications down the toilet.

Get Naloxone

- ▶ Naloxone is available without a prescription from your doctor. Ask your pharmacist today about how you can get **naloxone**, a medicine that can reverse an opioid overdose. To learn more, visit: preventoverdoseri.org/get-naloxone