



Talk to Your Doctor

What to ask your doctor before taking a prescribed opioid.

Every patient or advocate should ask questions whenever being prescribed an opioid. Prescription opioids may not be right for everyone. Asking questions is important for your health when your doctor, dentist, or other health care professional prescribes you an opioid, such as hydrocodone, oxycodone, codeine, or morphine.

What should you ask? Start with:

- ✓ Why do I need this medication, and how can I be sure it is right for me?
- ✓ What are the risks of using prescription opioids for pain, especially chronic pain?
- ✓ Are there non-opioid alternatives that could help with pain relief?
- ✓ How long should I take this medication?
- ✓ What if I have a history of addiction to tobacco, alcohol, or drugs or if there is a history of addiction in my family?

If your doctor (still) thinks your pain is best managed with a prescription opioid, then ask:

- ✓ Could this treatment interact with my other medicines, especially ones prescribed for anxiety, sleeping problems, or seizures?
- ✓ How can I reduce the risk of potential side effects from this medication?
- ✓ How should I store my opioid medication to prevent other people from taking it?
- ✓ What should I do with unused opioid medicine?
- ✓ Should I get a prescription for naloxone?

Take control of your health and reduce your risk of addiction.
Ask your doctor these questions before taking opioids.

Learn more at talktoyourdoctor.org