

MANAGING PAIN AFTER DENTAL TREATMENT

**Pain after a procedure is normal.
Our goal is to help you safely manage
your pain to a comfortable level.**



What is an opioid? An opioid is a strong prescription pain medication with risk of misuse, abuse and addiction. Most dental procedures do not require opioids for post-operative pain.

COMMON NAMES OF PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS:

- Hydrocodone (Vicodin, Norco)
- Oxycodone (Percocet, OxyContin)
- Morphine
- Codeine (Tylenol #3, Tylenol #4)
- Fentanyl
- Tramadol (Ultram)

SOME POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF OPIOID USE INCLUDE:

- nausea
- vomiting
- sleepiness
- dizziness
- constipation

KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT OPIOID ADDICTION

You are at higher risk of developing a dependence or an addiction to opioids if you:

- Have a history of depression or anxiety.
- Have a history of using or abusing alcohol, tobacco, or drugs (including prescription or street drugs).
- Have a history of long-term (chronic) pain.
- Take opioids for longer than a week.
- Take more pills, more often, than your dentist prescribed.

USING OPIOIDS SAFELY

- Use opioid medications as prescribed and for severe pain only.
- As your pain gets better, wait longer between doses.
- Store your opioids in a secure out-of-sight location.
- Do not mix opioids with alcohol or other medications that can cause drowsiness.
- Do not share the pills with others.

PROMPTLY DISPOSE OF UNUSED OPIOIDS

- Search “Operation Medicine Drop” online to locate permanent drop box sites or a take back event near you.
- Mix drugs (do not crush) with used coffee grounds or kitty litter in a plastic bag, then throw away.

**operation
medicine
drop**
↓

YOUR DENTIST WANTS TO KEEP YOU SAFE.



TELL HIM/HER ABOUT YOUR USE OF:

- Prescription pain medications
- Benzodiazepines (Valium, Xanax, Klonopin)
- Sedatives (Ambien, Seroquel)
- Stimulants (Ritalin, Adderall)
- Antidepressants (Prozac, Celexa)
- Over-the-counter medications, vitamins or herbals
- Recreational drugs (CBD, marijuana, etc.)

ALSO SHARE ANY HISTORY OF:

- Substance use disorder including alcohol and tobacco
- Mood disorder (Depression, bipolar disorder)
- Anxiety
- Chronic pain
- Sleep apnea
- Breathing problems

Women should tell their dentist if they are pregnant.

FAQ



DENTAL PAIN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. How long should I expect to have pain?** Most patients are pain free three days after their dental procedures.
- 2. Can I use over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil)?** Yes, if you appropriately use them for other pain issues, you should be able to use them for dental pain.
- 3. What other things can I do to help manage my pain?** Ice, rest, dietary restrictions/soft foods, salt water rinses, relaxation, meditation, massage and music can help control your pain.
- 4. Who do I call if my pain is not controlled, getting worse, or I am having side effects from my medications?** Call the office and share your concerns so we can address them together.

Dentist's Name

Dentist's Phone Number

Nearest Drop-off Site



**NC Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health • Oral Health Section**

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