Acute Pain Management

Learn to Manage Your Acute Pain

Acute pain usually:

- Starts quickly
- Is caused by something specific like surgery or an injury
- Does not last longer than a few months



What's the Plan?

STEP 1

Use over-the-counter pain relievers and other pain relief methods **FIRST**.

Examples:

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
- Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin®)
 - Stronger doses of these medicines are prescriptions
 - See below for important pain relief methods and tools

STEP 2

If you still have pain, continue using over-the-counter pain relievers and add your opioid meds **AS PRESCRIBED**.

Examples:

- Hydrocodone (Norco, Vicodin or Lortab)
- Oxycodone-acetaminophen (Percocet®)
- Tramadol (Ultram®)

STEP 3

LOWER your use of pain meds over time.

Timeline:

- Re-check your need for opioids every 5 to 7 days
- Stop opioids as soon as possible

Treating Pain

There are many ways to treat pain without the use of opioids.

- Self-care: Things you can do to lower pain on your own may include daily body movement, eating healthy or doing activities you enjoy.
- Key tools: Talk to your care team about how these could help you.
 - Mindfulness or meditation therapy
 - Cold therapy
 - TENS unit: a device that treats nerve pain
 - Music therapy
 - Aromatherapy
 - Pet Therapy
- Non-opioid medicines: Talk to your care team about these options.





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How a Pain Plan Helps You

- Get back to movement, exercise, activities, and relationships
- Improve happiness, satisfaction, and overall quality of life
- Understand your pain and create best plan for you
- Address other medical issues related to pain



Why Do We Limit the Use of Opioids?

Opioids can cause many side effects or problems:

- Constipation (cannot poop)
- Depression (feeling down or sad for long periods)
- Higher sensitivity to pain
- Long-term use, abuse, and overdose



What To Do if You Feel Like Your Meds Are Not Working Well

- Contact the doctor who prescribed your pain meds. You can call or send a message through your MyChart.
- Talk to your care team about options that will meet your specific needs.



We work together to create the best pain management plan for you. Our goal is to stop opioid use in 7 days or less. Please work with your care team for ongoing pain issues.

Approved by Atrium Health Medical Surgical Health Education Committee, January 2022.

