



Managing chronic pain is a long term process  
Be patient

Different pain medications have different risks and benefits

Create a plan with your provider that is right for you

## Medications can be a helpful tool for pain, in some situations



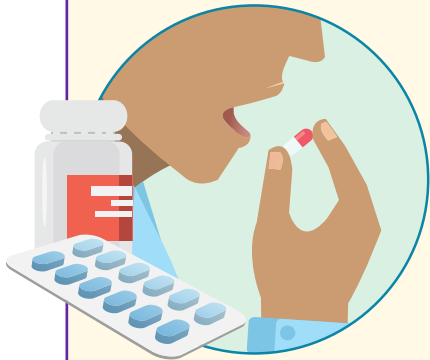
Opioid medications



Over-the-counter medications



Anti-seizure medications



Muscle relaxants



Talk to your provider about your pain medication



Anti-depressants



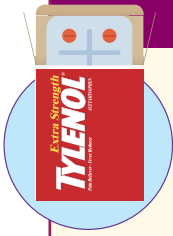
Cannabis



Topical

**Medications are never the only answer.**

## Common Pain Medications: Use and Risks



### TYLENOL (Acetaminophen)

- Relieves mild to moderate pain from headache, muscle aches, arthritis, backache, toothaches, colds and fevers.
- **Risks:** Excess use can cause liver damage.



### ASPIRIN, ADVIL, MOTRIN, ALEVE (NSAIDs)

- Relieves mild to moderate pain and reduces inflammation.
- **Risks:** Taking these medications regularly can cause problems with your digestion and increase the risk of bleeding in your stomach.



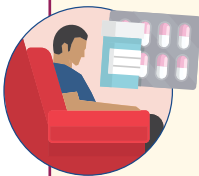
### TOPICAL

- For localized pain.
- **Risks:** Skin irritation.



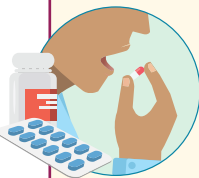
### ANTI-SEIZURE

- For nerve pain and headaches.
- **Risks:** Sleepiness, confusion, dizziness.



### ANTI-DEPRESSANTS

- Some anti-depressants can help nerve pain and headaches. Treating depression and anxiety can improve pain.
- **Risks:** Sleepiness, dizziness, agitation, confusion, dry mouth, sexual dysfunction.



### MUSCLE RELAXANTS

- For short term muscle aches.
- **Risks:** Sleepiness. Can contribute to an overdose if used with opioids.



### CANNABIS (Marijuana)

- Used for many different kinds of pain, though evidence is limited.
- **Risks:** Dizziness, confusion, dry mouth, sleepiness, nausea and vomiting.
- Note: Illegal federally and in some states.

**Talk to your provider about what pain medications are best for you.**

Find more ways to help with your pain:  
[www.northwestpainguidance.org/paineducationtoolkit](http://www.northwestpainguidance.org/paineducationtoolkit)



# Opioid Pain Medications: Use and Risks



## OPIOIDS – WHAT ARE THEY?

Opioids are strong prescription pain medications used to treat moderate to severe pain, such as after a major injury or major surgery.

### > COMMON BRANDS

OxyContin, Vicodin, Codeine, and Percocet

### > WHEN ARE OPIOIDS USEFUL?

- Relieves pain from major injuries, typically prescribed for 3 to 7 days
- Relieves pain after major surgeries
- For comfort at end of life

### > WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- Less effective over time (tolerance)
- Dependence may occur
- Possible withdrawal symptoms
- Dizziness, sluggishness and confusion
- Constipation and nausea
- Reduced sexual drive and function
- Slowed breathing that can worsen sleep apnea
- May cause overdose or death if taken with other pills or alcohol

## Use, Storage and Disposal



### HOW TO USE OPIOID PAIN MEDICATION SAFELY

- Take only as prescribed.
- Avoid alcohol, sedatives, and muscle relaxants while taking opioids.
- If you become too sleepy or have breathing problems: – Call 911 right away and do not take any more medications, including opioids.
- Your doctor may prescribe Naloxone (Narcan) a drug to reverse accidental overdose.



### HOW TO STORE AND DISPOSE OF PAIN MEDICINES SAFELY

- Never let anyone else use your medicine.
- Always store your medicine in a safe place, away from children and pets.
- Don't leave potentially deadly drugs in your medicine cabinet where they can be easily stolen and sold or abused.
- Dispose of all your unused medicine properly.



[See this link for a list of take back locations in Oregon](#)





# CLASSES OF PAIN MEDICATIONS – Common Uses and Side Effects

Medication Class	Drug Names	Brand Names	Common Uses	Common Side Effects
Over-the-Counter	Acetaminophen	Tylenol	For mild to moderate pain. Can buy without prescription.	Tylenol: liver damage Advil/Aleve: stomach ulcers, kidney damage
	Ibuprofen	Advil, Motrin		
	Naproxen	Aleve		
Anti-Seizure	Gabapentin	Neurontin	For nerve pain and headaches.	Sleepiness, confusion, dizziness
	Pregabalin	Lyrica		
Anti-Depressants	Amitriptyline	Elavil	For nerve pain and headaches. Treating depression and anxiety can improve pain.	Sleepiness, dizziness, agitation, confusion, dry mouth, sexual dysfunction
	Duloxetine	Cymbalta		
	Venlafaxine	Effexor		
Creams, Gels, and Other Topical Medications	Lidocaine	Lidoderm	For localized pain.	Skin irritation
	Diclofenac	Voltaren		
Muscle Relaxants	Cyclobenzaprine	Flexeril	Used short term for muscle aches.	Sleepiness. Can interact with opioids, sedatives and alcohol to depress breathing.
	Tizanidine	Zanaflex		
	Methocarbamol	Robaxin		
Cannabis	THC – can be mind altering CBD – not mind altering	Too numerous to count, specific to states.		Dizziness, confusion, dry mouth, sleepiness, nausea and vomiting NOTE: Illegal federally and legal in some states
Opioids	Morphine	MS Contin, Kadian	For severe pain, most useful for short periods, like after surgery or acute traumatic injury. Evidence is poor for long term use.	Respiratory depression, sleep apnea, dizziness, confusion, sluggishness, vomiting, constipation, sexual dysfunction, dependence, addiction, death
	Hydrocodone	Norco, Vicodin		
	Oxycodone	Percocet, Oxycontin,		
	Hydromorphone	Dilaudid		
	Fentanyl	Duragesic		
	Methadone	Dolophine		
	Buprenorphine	Suboxone		