

# Making Health Care Better Together

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## DO'S AND DON'TS OF PAIN MEDICINES

*These tips can help you or anyone you know to safely use opioid pain medicines*



- **Know your medicines:** Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about HOW and WHY you take each medicine.
- **Know the signs of overdose:** Ask others in your home to help you watch out for:
  - slurred speech • confusion • difficulty staying awake • dizziness • vomiting • trouble breathing • pale or clammy skin
- **Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about naloxone, a medicine to treat opioid overdose.**
- **Store your medicines safely:** Keep them in the original, labeled packaging where others can't access them. Dispose of old or unused medicines.
- **Tell every member of your health care team:** Bring all of your medicines to every doctor or hospital visit so they can be reviewed.



- **Don't take any medicine that was not prescribed to you, and don't share your medicine with others.**
- **Don't take any medicine left over from an earlier treatment**
- **Don't change the dose or how often you take your medicines without talking to your doctor.**
- **Don't take pain medicines with alcohol or other drugs, and don't take them with other medicines without checking with your doctor.**

## GLOSSARY:

Opioid – A narcotic pain medicine that reduces the feeling of pain

Overdose – Your body's response to too much medicine; can be deadly

Medicine disposal – Throw away medicines in the trash or talk to your pharmacist about other disposal options