

Worried about your Medicare patients taking opioids?

For adults aged 65 and older, opioid-related hospitalizations increased by 34% and emergency department visits increased by 74% between 2010 and 2015.

Even at therapeutic and appropriate doses, risks of opioid therapy include:

- Increased rate of falls
- Fractures
- All-cause mortality
- Cognitive impairment
- Altered drug metabolism
- Compromised respiration

The risks of harm may also be exacerbated by the high frequency at which older adults see multiple providers and specialists who often do not coordinate their care.

A 2016-2017 Alliant Health Solutions intervention including over 11,000 Medicare beneficiaries in GA and NC showed that when these materials were distributed to high risk Medicare beneficiaries who are taking opioids, the relative reduction in opioid related adverse drug events was greater than 65%.

Learn more about [My Med Bags](#) and order yours today!

Click [here](#) to educate medical staff on proper Medication Reconciliation.

References: Weiss AJ, Heslin KC, Barrett ML, Izar R, et al. Opioid-Related Inpatient Stays and Emergency Department Visits Among Patients Aged 65 Years and Older, 2010 and 2015: Statistical Brief #244. Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (HCUP) Statistical Briefs. Rockville (MD)2018.

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Prevent adverse drug events by using Alliant Health Solutions resources:

- [Do's and Don'ts of Pain Medicines](#)
- [My Medication Bags](#)
- [Medicine Review Tip Sheet](#)



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 when to take each medicine.
- Know the signs of overdose. Ask others to help you watch for signs of overdose, including: unresponsive, shallow breathing, or a slowed pulse.
- 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 about all of your medicines to every doctor or hospital visit so they can be reviewed.

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.

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MEDICINE REVIEW: TIPS FOR YOU

Alliant Health Solutions is Working with YOU to Make Health Care Better

EVERY MEDICINE, EVERY TIME

Keeping track of medications will help keep you safe and healthy.

Reviewing your medications at doctor visits is the best way to make sure your doctor knows all of the medicines that you take. Your doctor also wants to make sure that you take the correct medicine in the correct amount at the correct time.

Keeping an accurate list helps avoid problems that could hurt you, such as:

- Drug Interactions
- Food Interactions
- Missing Medications
- Duplicate Medications
- Incorrect Dose
- Incorrect Time or Frequency

Bring all of your medications to doctor visits, including:

- All prescriptions you take
- Any medications you no longer take
- Over-the-Counter (OTC) medicines such as Aspirin or Benadryl
- Vitamins & Herbs
- Eye drops, creams, patches and inhalers
- Tanning or self-monitoring supplies

Ask for Updated List

After your doctor has reviewed all of your medicines, ask for a printout of the updated medicine list and share it with your other doctors and pharmacy.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about ANY medicine question or concern, especially if you cannot read the name of a medicine or understand the directions. NEVER stop taking medicine without telling your doctor.

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