

# 10 THINGS

EVERY PATIENT IN PAIN SHOULD KNOW



## 1. BE PART OF YOUR CARE

It is hard to know what another person's pain feels like. You need to speak up and be able to describe your pain. You can bring family or friends to advocate for you.



## 2. TELL YOUR DOCTOR IF

You have any risk factors such as, using opioids (like morphine or codeine) daily or regularly, if you have a history of snoring or sleep apnea, pre-existing medical conditions, smoking or use of sedating drugs like Valium or Benadryl. Ask if you have any additional risk factors.



## 3. ASK YOUR DOCTOR

Why you are experiencing pain, how long you should expect the pain to last, how your pain will be treated, if there are alternative treatments or if you should change your dose to match your pain level.



## 4. MAKE A PAIN MANAGEMENT PLAN

It is important that you work with your physician to make a personal pain management and treatment plan. Your care team will work with you to balance pain control with as few side effects as possible. It is important to know that you may receive non-opioid medication to treat pain and your breathing may also be monitored.



## 5. LET YOUR DOCTOR KNOW OF ANY SIDE EFFECTS

It is likely your doctor will prescribe a combination of medicines to control your pain. Unfortunately, opioids have unpleasant side effects including nausea, vomiting, itching, dizziness, loss of balance, falls, severe constipation, confusion or difficulty waking up and staying awake. Overdoses can occur from requesting pain medication when you are too sleepy or applying a pain patch after forgetting that one has already been applied.



## 6. TRACK YOUR PAIN

Report any side effects you may feel. It is important to write down the different types of pain you are experiencing and when you feel that pain. Pain while at rest and pain during movement can often feel different. Your care team will ask you about your pain: it is important to share what you have tracked.



## 7. SPEAK UP

If your pain is above 4 out of 10 and isn't getting better with medication. Also, if you feel a new type of pain or side effect from pain medication you are taking, tell your nurse or doctor.



## 8. BE AWARE

Of signs of an overdose or being overly medicated which may include skin that is clammy or pale, low heart rate and blood pressure, small pupils, limpness, slow breathing, less urine output, slurred speech, confusion and extreme sleepiness. Seek help immediately if you notice any of the above symptoms.



## 9. CONSULT A PAIN SPECIALIST

If you have risk factors or a history of problems with managing pain or if your pain is not consistently controlled. Ask if a pain specialist or anesthesiologist can be part of your care team.



## 10. TALK TO YOUR PHARMACIST

When going home with opioids, you should know the dose, how often and when it is taken and how long you will take it. If you miss a dose, do not take a double dose. Ask your pharmacist about using opioids safely at home.



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