

Prescription Opioid Safety

Prescription Opioids (also called narcotics) carry serious risks of *addiction* and *overdose*, especially when you take them for a long time.

It is important that you:

Always supervise children and adolescents when they are around medicines.
Do not allow children and adolescents to give themselves opioid medicines.

Safe use of opioids:

1. Always remember, opioids are powerful pain relievers. They should be used sparingly.
2. Give the opioid **exactly** as ordered. Talk to your doctor before you make any changes.
3. Use an accurate *medicine* measuring spoon or cup.
4. Never crush, cut, chew or dissolve long-acting opioids.
5. Do not share this medication with anyone else.
6. Check with your doctor before taking any other medications.
7. Keep opioids in their original bottle or box.
8. Do not use alcohol, street drugs or operate machinery (**no driving**) while on opioids.

Pain medications can cause serious or even life-threatening side effects:

Common side effects	When to call the doctor	Call 911
Nausea and vomiting	Confusion	Trouble breathing
Constipation	Slurred speech	Cannot stay awake
Itching	Stumbling when walking	Cannot talk normally
Dry mouth		
Dizzy or Sleepy		

Safe Pain Management Using Opioids, Alternative Medications and Therapies

Your doctor will decide the medicine that works best for your child's pain. If your child is younger than 6 months of age, **do NOT give ibuprofen**. No matter the child's age, acetaminophen can be given. Other names for these medications are:

Acetaminophen: Tylenol®

Ibuprofen: Motrin® or Advil®

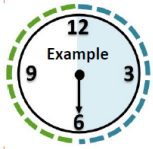
Other pain medications may be recommended or prescribed for your child. Studies show taking acetaminophen and ibuprofen around the clock (either together every 6 hours **or** alternating each medicine every 3 hours) can provide effective pain control with fewer side effects than opioids.

Know your child's medicines to prevent harm.

Many prescriptions and over the counter pain, cold and flu medicines contain acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin®). Taking these with other medicines may cause an overdose or bad reaction. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking any medicines that contain these.

Combined every 6 hours:

Take acetaminophen and ibuprofen *together* every 6 hours.



At 12:00 pm: Take acetaminophen and ibuprofen

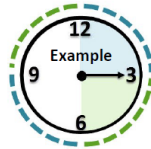
Wait 6 hours

At 6:00 pm: Take both medicines again

OR

Alternating every 3 hours:

Alternate acetaminophen with ibuprofen every 3 hours.



At 12:00 pm: Take acetaminophen

At 3:00 pm: Take ibuprofen

At 6:00 pm: Take acetaminophen

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There are lots of options to help with pain control. Ice or heat, elevate if possible, massage, distraction, reduce stress and even food and fluids can help. Drink lots of water, limit sodas, do not skip meals, or offer smaller more frequent meals if nausea is an issue. If you need help managing your child's pain, ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for some additional resources or suggestions.

Safe storage of opioids:

1. Store opioids in a dry and cool place
2. Store in a place that is out of reach and sight of children and pets.
3. The safest way to store opioids is in a **locked box or safe**. It is your responsibility as a parent or guardian to protect your child from accidental or intentional overdose by controlling access to these medications.

Safe Disposal of Opioids

Proper disposal or getting rid of opioids is very important. They can be dangerous if children or pets eat them. They also make tempting targets for theft.

1. Le Bonheur Children's Hospital: you can return any unused medicine to Le Bonheur Children's Hospital Outpatient Pharmacy in the Outpatient Clinic Area, Ground Floor.
2. Ask your local pharmacy if they have a take back box.
3. Visit https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/index.html to learn more.
4. Call your local waste management company to see if they have a take back program.
5. The FDA recommends always flushing any leftover or used pain patches down the toilet. Fold it in half so the sticky sides stick together, flush, and immediately wash your hands.