



WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

U.S. National Library of Medicine

medlineplus.gov/nondrugpainmanagement.html

Information on non-drug pain management.

The American Chronic Pain Association

www.theaacpa.org

Information on all types of treatment for chronic pain.

Centers for Disease Control

www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose

Information on the opioid epidemic in America, and options for patients

What You Should Know About **CHRONIC PAIN** and Opioids



www.saferxlakecounty.org

707-998-8488



WHAT ARE OPIOIDS

Opioids are the natural derivatives of the opium poppy, and their synthetic analogues. Here are some of the most common opioids: morphine (Avinza), codeine, heroin, hydromorphone (Dilaudid), oxycodone (Opana), hydrocodone (Vicodin, Norco), oxycodone (Percocet, OxyContin), buprenorphine (Subutex, Butrans), fentanyl (Actiq), tramadol (Ultram), tapentadol, pethidine (Demerol), methadone (Dolophine)

CHRONIC PAIN & OPIOIDS

Opioids are no longer considered a first-line treatment for chronic pain. Alternative treatments for treating common types of pain, such as lower back pain, or the pain from fibromyalgia and osteoarthritis, are as effective or more effective than opioids in many cases.

Opioids have serious side effects that may reduce your quality of life – drowsiness, constipation, sexual dysfunction, risk of falls, depression, addiction and poisoning.

Anyone taking opioids needs to be aware of the risks and be careful with their use. Up to one in four people taking long-term opioid therapy will become addicted, depending on genetics, environment, and amount of exposure to the opioid.

ALTERNATIVES TO OPIOIDS

✓ **Non-Opioid Drugs:**
over-the-counter pain relievers such as aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, naproxen

✓ **Physical Treatments:**
physical therapy, yoga, massage, chiropracty

✓ **Mental Treatments:**
mindfulness, behavioral therapy, hypnosis

PREVENT

If you have an episode of acute pain, such as from surgery or injury, have it treated promptly to prevent it from turning into chronic pain.

TREAT

If you are currently suffering from chronic pain, discuss with your doctor the many possible treatments. Every individual is different, and you may have to try several approaches to find the combination of treatments that works best for you.

BE CAREFUL

If you are currently taking opioids to control chronic pain, discuss with your doctor whether you might improve your quality of life by reducing opioids or eliminating them by using alternatives.

TO PREVENT OPIOID ADDICTION BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING SIGNS OF ADDICTION:



- Taking the opioid in larger amounts or for longer than you're prescribed.
- Wanting to cut down or stop using the opioid but being unable to.
- Spending a lot of time getting, using, or recovering from use of the opioid.
- Attempting to keep your usage a secret.
- Cravings and urges to use.



- Not managing to do what you should at work, home, or school because of usage.
- Continuing to use, even when it causes problems in relationships.
- Taking risks to obtain opioids.
- Feeling that you need it to deal with your problems.
- Making excuses when people act concerned.
- Giving up social, occupational, or recreational activities due to use.



- Using even when it puts you in danger.
- Continuing to use, even when you know you have a physical or psychological problem that could have been caused or made worse by the opioid.
- Needing more of the opioid to get the effect you want (tolerance).
- Seeking additional substances or illicit substances to get the effect you want.