

Talk to Your Doctor About Pain Medications



There are options for pain management. Different types of pain medications carry their own benefits and risks. Opioid pain medications work by acting on pain receptors in the brain. Possible side effects include constipation, sleepiness, nausea, and euphoria. If taken at sufficient dose or in combination with other substances, opioids can result in coma and death. Some people can also become addicted to opioid medications.

Make sure your doctor knows about:

- All medications and other substances you are currently taking including:
 1. other prescription medications
 2. over-the-counter medications
 3. recreational drugs including marijuana
 4. alcoholic beverages
 5. herbal supplements
 6. nutritional supplements
- The nature and frequency of your current symptoms
- Any ongoing health conditions you have
- Problems you have had with medications taken in the past
- Any history of chemical addiction, depression, and anxiety
- Any aspect of your job that requires special safety considerations such as working with equipment, vehicles, or hazardous chemicals
- How much driving you need to do

Be honest and thorough so that the treatment prescribed is most appropriate for you.

Make sure you understand the risks associated with opioid pain medications including possible side effects and risk of addiction or overdose (National Safety Council, 2014):

- ✓ **Ask your doctor if there are alternatives to opioid pain medication that would be appropriate for you**
- ✓ **If opioid pain medications are necessary, ask your doctor if you can have a short-term prescription**
- ✓ **Inform your doctor if you experience any problems with the medications prescribed**



**Missouri Department of Mental Health
Division of Behavioral Health**

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