

Pain Medicine Guide for Kids

How to safely use pain medicine

In this guide, you will learn:

- What to ask your doctor about your medicine
- How to take your pain medicine safely
- How to keep from getting hooked on your pain medicine
- What to do if you have side effects from your pain medicine



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What is different about my pain medicine?

Your pain medicine is different from other pain medicine you might take. You can only get this medicine by going to the doctor. It is called an “opioid” (you say this “oh-pee-oid”).

Doctors will often tell you to take opioid pain medicine after surgery or if you get hurt.

This pain medicine keeps your brain from telling you that you are hurting.

Some people do not take these medicines as their doctor tells them. This has caused problems all across the country. Hundreds of people die every day from taking too much pain medicine, and millions are hooked (addicted).

Listen to your parents or caregivers and your doctor to make sure you take your medicine the right way. You can use this guide to help you.

How can I take my pain medicine safely?

My Pain Medicine Safety Checklist

- Only take the medicine your parent or caregiver gives you. Do not take medicine by yourself.
- Do not take medicines with alcohol (like some cold medicines) when you are on pain medicine. It can lead to major health problems, even death.
- Do not skateboard, ride a bike, or play on things you could fall off of while you are on pain medicine. This is because the medicine can make you sleepy, and you might get hurt.
- Do not share your medicine with anyone.
- Do not take anyone else’s medicine.

How will my pain medicine make me feel?

Your pain medicine is very strong. When you have been on them for a short time, you might feel:

- Sleepy
- Sick to your stomach (nausea)
- Itchy
- That it is hard to go to the bathroom (hard to poop)

These happen a lot, so you should not be scared if they do.

If you have to take pain medicine for a while, you might also feel:

- Your pain does not go away as much (you need more medicine for the same pain relief)
- You get sick when you stop taking the medicine (your body does not like to be without the medicine)
- You want the medicine even when you do not need it (your body thinks it needs the medicine)

Tell your parents or caregivers if you feel any of these.



Should I be afraid that I will get hooked on my pain medicine (addicted)?

If you take our pain medicine the right way for a short time, you probably will not get addicted. For example, if you broke your arm and you take only the medicine your parents or caregivers give you, then you will probably not get addicted.

But, you might get addicted if you:

- Take more of the medicine than you are supposed to
- Take it for longer than you are supposed to

What can I ask my doctor about my pain medicine?

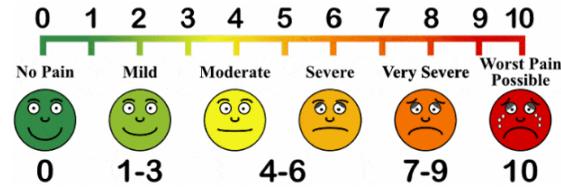
Before you go to the doctor, tell your parent or caregiver if you have any questions about your pain medicines. Also, be sure to ask the doctor yourself any questions about taking this medicine.

Some common questions kids have are:

- What is the medicine for?
- Is it safe?
- How much of the medicine should I take?
- How will the medicine make me feel?
- When can I stop taking the medicine?
- Should I take this medicine on an empty stomach or with food?
- What can I do while I am taking this medicine (such as skateboarding, riding my bike)?
- What can I eat or drink while I am taking this medicine (foods, drinks, other medicines)?

How do I keep track of my pain?

Before you take your medicine, check where your pain level is. Use this chart, and tell your parents or caregiver how much pain you feel:



2 hours after you took your medicine, check your pain again. If your pain is a 5 or more, tell your parents or caregiver. They will call your doctor.

When should I call 911?

You, your parents (or caregiver) should call 911 right away if you:

- Cannot get your breath
- Have a hard time swallowing
- Have a hard time waking up after taking medicine

This could be a reaction to your medicine that you need special help for.

Tell your parent or caregiver if you feel:

- Hyper (hopped up, wired)
- More active than normal
- Scared
- Extra sleepy

They will call your doctor.

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