

## Post-Operative Pain Medication

Surgery creates harm to the body and will hurt. A pain level of 0 after surgery is not possible.

**How will my pain be managed after surgery?** You will receive “numbing medicine” (Novocain or similar) at the site of surgery which will keep you comfortable for a few hours after the surgery. You have the option of receiving a nerve block if we offer it to you. It is optional for bigger surgeries whereby numbing the site locally alone might not be sufficient. If you are having: (Carpal tunnel release, trigger finger release, small lumps, or masses on the finger, Dequervains release, small foreign body removal from the hand of fingers) then you can use **over the counter** medicine like Tylenol or Ibuprofen. You can use both medicines at once or alternate them every 2-3 hours. A narcotic will NOT be prescribed. If you are having Fixation of any wrist, finger, forearm fracture fixation, tendon repair, cubital tunnel release, elbow surgery for any reason, ganglion cyst, thumb arthritis surgery then a prescription for a **narcotic** for 1 week only will be sent electronically. It will be sent to your preferred pharmacy listed in your electronic record. Please call your pharmacy immediately after surgery to make sure they have the prescription and that they are not in shortage.

**How long is the narcotics prescribed?** Because of the opioid crisis and Federal Government regulations, narcotics will be prescribed and refilled under a strict protocol for one week only. Make your prescription last for the week it was intended. It is always prescribed to be taken AS NEEDED and not around the clock.

**Can I get muscle relaxers?** We don't use them, so please don't ask. They are sedating, addictive, and ineffective in the healing process.

**Can I get nausea medications?** All narcotics cause nausea as a side effect. We do not routinely prescribe medicines for nausea. If pain meds make you nauseated, the best practice is to wean quickly and get off them. Take the narcotics with food which can help with that. We may prescribe nausea medicine for a few days in severe circumstances.

**Do I have to take my prescribed narcotic medicine?** No, you do it. It is prescribed as “take as needed”. You can use over the counter medicine like Tylenol or Ibuprofen. You can use both medicines at once or alternate them every 2-3 hours. Take the narcotic with food and water. Do not drink or drive while on the narcotic medicine.

**What do I take if I already have a pain contract with another provider and already taking pain medications?** It will be your responsibility to update your provider that you will be prescribed a 1-week supply of additional narcotics after your surgery. You would take your usual daily pain medication and then add on top of that the pain medication prescribed after your surgery.

**What If I have preference for specific pain medication?** Please inform your nurse Hannah ahead of time what that medication would be. The routine one prescribed is Norco (Hydrocodone with Tylenol). If there are some national shortages for Norco then Percocet (Oxycodone with Tylenol) is prescribed instead.

**If I am on suboxone, what will I get for pain medications?** You will have to coordinate with the provider who prescribes your suboxone if you must stop it. For smaller procedures (to be determined by your surgeon), suboxone can be continued and will act as your pain medication. You will NOT need to stop it and will NOT be prescribed any additional narcotics after the surgery.

**Can I take over the counter medicines alone or in addition to the narcotics prescribed?** Yes, you may with some limitations below.

*Anti-Inflammatories* (such as Advil, Aleve, Motrin, Naproxen, Diclofenac among others): Unless you are elderly, on blood thinners, or have poor kidney function, or have stomach ulcers or history of internal or external bleeding, then you may take an over-the-counter dose. Take them with food and stay hydrated.

*Tylenol:* Your narcotics prescription already has Tylenol at 325 mg per pill. You may do the math and take up to 3500mg total per day.

All prescription medications will be sent electronically to your pharmacy of record on the day of your surgery. Please call you pharmacy immediately after surgery to confirm availability in stock and readiness to pick after your surgery.

Your pharmacy of record is: \_\_\_\_\_