

Why narcotic/opioid medications were not prescribed

Your emergency physician thinks that your pain will be best managed with non-opioid medications. Non-opioid medications, such as ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), naproxen (Aleve), or acetaminophen (Tylenol), may be as, or more, effective than opioids, especially for chronic pain. They are also much safer.

Important facts to know about prescription opioids:

- Common opioids include oxycodone (Percocet, OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin, Norco), and morphine (MSContin).
- Opioid addiction is a national concern. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Surgeon General recommend that physicians reduce opioid prescribing due to a national epidemic of opioid dependence and overdose.
- Opioid drugs are addictive, even in small doses.
- Opioid overdoses are common: 78 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose. More Americans die from opioid overdose than from motor vehicle accidents or guns.
- Most opioid overdoses are accidental.
- Opioid drugs are often ineffective for pain, particularly chronic pain, and may make you more sensitive to pain.

Pain management alternatives:

If you have pain, try taking over-the-counter medications such as ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), naproxen (Aleve), or acetaminophen (Tylenol) as directed, or your emergency physician may have prescribed you a non-opioid medication.

Always take only as much medication as directed, as taking too much can be harmful to your health.

You may find that massage and acupuncture help some kinds of pain. Heat and cold compresses can also be helpful with some types of pain. Regular stretching, over-the-counter creams and lotions (such as capsaicin, lidocaine, or salicylic acid), or lidocaine patches may also be helpful.

Other non-opioid alternatives for pain control to consider include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Biofeedback, and Exercise Therapy. More information is available from the CDC at:

https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdf/alternative_treatments-a.pdf

Schedule a follow-up appointment with your primary care provider within one week to discuss your emergency room visit and to re-evaluate your pain.

Return to the emergency room if you experience new pain, severely worsening pain, or any other new or concerning symptoms.

Concerned about opioid addiction? Find out more:

- Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator: <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>
- Seeking Drug Abuse Treatment: Know What to Ask.
https://www.drugabuse.gov/sites/default/files/treatmentbrochure_web.pdf
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's treatment help line: at
(800) 662-HELP221525