



## Narcotic Medication Information Disclosure

### **What are Narcotics?**

Narcotics are strong pain relievers that are all related to the opium poppy. Therefore, they are some of the oldest pain relievers that are known to mankind. Narcotics are most commonly used to treat moderate to severe pain. Narcotics include Morphine and morphine-like drugs (also called opiates) such as heroin, methadone, oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine and tramadol. Generally, narcotics may work well for certain types of pain and are relatively safe when taken as directed by your health care provider. Remember, not all pain is relieved by narcotics and not all persons that have chronic pain (pain persisting longer than 6 months) should take narcotics. These drugs **may** be prescribed if your pain is moderate to severe and your doctor feels that you are a good candidate for taking such medications.

### **ARE NARCOTICS DANGEROUS?**

YES! Narcotics ARE DANGEROUS. If not taken exactly as prescribed, overdose is much more likely and can result in death. Mixing medications, including alcohol and over-the-counter medications, can make it much more likely to cause an inadvertent overdose. It is extremely important and expected that you will let your doctor know every medication that you take and that you will refrain from recreational drugs including alcohol to avoid **deadly consequences**. Whenever possible, we ask that you bring a family member or close friend to help monitor your behavior and share in the responsibility of your safety.

### **Can I become addicted to narcotics?**

You can become addicted to narcotics. Addiction is a disease characterized by continued use despite negative consequences. It involves compulsion and obsession over using the medication. Abuse may be different from addiction and can be described as taking medications for the euphoric (high) effect. The chances of addiction are less likely – but not eliminated- if you've never had an addiction problem to ANY drug, including alcohol or nicotine.

If you take narcotic medication chronically, you will develop tolerance and dependence to the medication. This is not the same as Addiction. It simply means that it will take more of the medication to get the same effect and if you stop taking the medication you will get sick.

### **What is tolerance?**

Tolerance is the need to increase the dosage of a narcotic to obtain the same level of pain relief. Tolerance is created by many factors, but simply, is your body's adjustment to taking a drug. There is a point at which the medications will stop working despite increasing the dose.

### **Do narcotics have side effects?**

Like many medications, there are side effects associated with taking Narcotics. Your health care provider can work with you to balance your pain relief and side effects by adjusting how much and when you take Narcotics. Your ability to drive or operate machinery may be affected when you start taking Narcotics or change your dose. You should not change your dose of Narcotics without speaking to your health care

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provider. Side effects with Narcotics may include dizziness, anxiety, constipation, nausea, vomiting, or drowsiness. Let your health care provider know about any side effects you may experience. Serious side effects may occur with Narcotics. These side effects include slowed breathing, lower blood pressure, and reduced heart function, overdose and death.

Call your health care provider and get medical help right away if you experience any of these side effects. Long term use of narcotic medications can cause decreases in the body's hormonal makeup. With men, this is seen as a lowering of testosterone levels. This may lower the sexual drive and the ability to obtain an erection. With women, there may be loss of menstruation and infertility. **There is some concern that these changes caused by taking chronic narcotics may cause permanent and non-reversible changes.**

#### **What can I do if I feel constipated?**

It is better to prevent constipation than to treat it once it occurs. You can help relieve your constipation by drinking more fluids. Also, eat more fruits and vegetables or try a mild laxative. If this does not work, tell your doctor as serious complications can occur including but not limited to bowel obstruction and death.

#### **What else should I know about narcotics?**

- **Use narcotics only as directed by your health care provider.**
- **Use narcotics only for the condition for which it was prescribed.**
- **You must not change your dose of your narcotic without talking to your health care provider.**
- **Do not use narcotics with alcohol.**
- **Do not use narcotics with sleeping medication or tranquilizers. Talk to your health care provider if you are taking other medications.**
- **Women who are pregnant or are planning to become pregnant should talk to their health care provider before using narcotics. Babies born to mothers who are dependent on narcotics will also be dependent on narcotics.**
- **Keep out of reach of children. Accidental overdose by a child is dangerous and may result in death.**
- **Narcotics can cause physical dependence, tolerance, abuse, addiction and death.**
- **Narcotics can cause constipation.** It is a good idea to take laxatives and/or other bowel aids when you start taking narcotics.
- **Narcotics can impair your ability to drive a vehicle or operate machinery.** We advise you to not operate a motor vehicle while taking narcotics. In some states, this is also against the law. Also do not perform any other possibly dangerous tasks until you know how narcotics will affect you.

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• **Prevent theft and misuse.** Narcotics are drugs that can be a target for some people to steal. Therefore, keep your narcotics in a safe place to protect it from theft. Selling or giving away this medicine is dangerous and against the law.

### **Specific Warnings about Methadone (Dolophine)**

- **Methadone can cause life-threatening heart beat problems that can lead to death.** Most of these heart beat problems have happened in people using large doses of Methadone for pain treatment.
- **Breathing problems from Methadone may not happen right away after taking a dose. Sometimes breathing problems will happen after you take a dose, even after pain has returned.** It is very important to take your Methadone exactly as your doctor has prescribed.

### **Do not take narcotics if:**

- Your health care provider did not prescribe narcotics for you
- You are allergic to the specific medicine in the narcotic
- You have severe asthma or other breathing problems
- You have a bowel obstruction or a blockage of the intestines

### **Before taking narcotics, tell your health care provider about:**

#### **1. All of your medical problems, especially the ones listed below:**

- Trouble breathing or lung problems
- Head injury
- Liver or kidney problems
- Adrenal gland problems, such as Addison's disease
- Convulsions or seizures
- Alcoholism
- Hallucinations or other severe mental problems
- Past or present substance abuse or drug addiction
- Hypotension or low blood pressure

**2. If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.** Women who are pregnant or plan to become pregnant should talk to their health care provider as some narcotics may harm your unborn baby.

**3. If you are breast-feeding.** Narcotics can be found in breast milk and may cause harm to the baby. You should choose to use a narcotic or to breast-feed, but not both. Discuss this with your health care provider.

**4. Any and all medicines you take.** Include prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Be especially careful about other medicines that may make you sleepy, such as other pain medicines, anti-depressant medicines, sleeping pills, anxiety medicines, antihistamines and tranquilizers. They may cause serious problems when taken together with narcotics, including death. Know the medicines you take and keep a list of them. Show this list to your doctor and pharmacist each time you get a new medicine.

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**Stopping Narcotics**

- **Talk with your health care provider before you stop taking your narcotics.** Many of these medications require a gradual tapering or decrease of your dose to prevent side effects.
- **Do not stop taking your narcotics all at once.** Talk with your health care provider about how you should stop taking these medications.

**What you should avoid while taking narcotics?**

- **You should not take narcotics with alcohol.** Taking narcotics with alcohol increases the risk of overdose
- **Your ability to drive or operate machinery may be affected when you start taking narcotics or change your dose.** You should not change your dose of narcotics without speaking to your health care Provider
- **Do not take other medicines without the approval of your health care provider.** This includes prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and supplements. Be especially careful about products that make you sleepy, such as sleeping medications and tranquilizers.

***Get medical help right away if:***

- Your breathing slows down
- You feel faint, dizzy, confused, or have any other unusual symptoms
- If you take too much of your narcotic or overdose, call 911 or your local emergency number right away.

**By my signature below, I certify that I understand and will comply with the above informed consent material for the narcotic medication(s) prescribed to me by Michael Willens, D.O., Advanced Pain Management Clinic, LLC.**

***(Note: This consent is separate and different from the Narcotic Agreement.***

**I also certify that I have been offered a copy of this consent document for my records and have received one if I have so requested.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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