

**HEALTH TIPS**  
WHAT YOU CAN DO

## Opioid Pain Medicines

Opioids are used to treat moderate to severe pain. They can provide relief when other medicines do not.

- Always tell your doctor if you are having pain.
- Make a plan with your doctor for using your pain medicines.
- Aim for pain relief that will let you keep doing the things you need and like to do.
- Your body may take a few days to get used to the opioid medicines.
- When used the right way your pain medicine should not stop working or become habit forming.

**Ask Your Doctor** when to take your pain medicine, how much to take and how often to take it.

**Ask Your Doctor** about laxatives that you might need while taking opioid medicines.

**Ask Your Doctor** about safe ways to reduce or stop taking pain medicine once you have less pain

**Call Your Doctor** if the medicine is not working—or if you have an upset stomach, you are throwing up or if you feel sleepy.

For more information, search [www.MedlinePlus.gov](http://www.MedlinePlus.gov)

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To help you take your pain medicine the right way:

- Do not take opioid pain medicines unless your doctor tells you to
- Always take pain medicines the way your doctor tells you
- Never take anyone else's pain medicine or let anyone else take yours
- Call your doctor if your pain medicine is not working or is causing problems
- Call your doctor before changing how and when you take your pain medicine
- Drink more water, eat more fiber, and take a laxative if your doctor tells you so you will not be constipated
- Do not drink alcohol or take other medicines with alcohol in them
- Do not take pain medicine if you are going to drive or need to be alert
- Always keep your medicines in a safe place so children cannot get to them

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