



# Knowing the Risks of Opioid Prescription Pain Medications

Opioid prescription pain medications are a type of medicine used to relieve pain. Some of the common names include oxycodone and acetaminophen (Percocet®); oxycodone, (OxyContin®); and hydrocodone and acetaminophen (Vicodin®).

## These medications...

- ▶ Cause your brain to block the feeling of pain; they *do not* treat the underlying cause of pain.
- ▶ **Are very addictive**, especially if they are not used correctly.
- ▶ **Increase your chances of accidental overdose, coma, and death** if taken with prescription medications, including anti-anxiety and sedating medications, and alcohol.

**Effective non-opioid options are available** for relieving short-term pain, including ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®), acetaminophen (Tylenol®), physical therapy, chiropractic, acupuncture, and cognitive behavioral therapy. Talk with your healthcare provider to learn more.

## Proper Dosage

Opioids should only be taken as directed. Misuse and abuse of opioids can be illegal, extremely harmful, and even deadly.

- ▶ **Never share this prescription with anyone.**
- ▶ **Store out of reach of children – one dose can cause an accidental overdose.**
- ▶ **Do not increase dosage or take more often than directed by your healthcare provider.**

## Get Rid of Medicines Safely

- ▶ There are many locations in Rhode Island that offer safe disposal of prescription pain medications. For locations, visit: [preventoverdoseri.org/get-rid-of-medicines](http://preventoverdoseri.org/get-rid-of-medicines)
- ▶ If you cannot get to a drug disposal location, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends flushing opioid prescription pain medications down the toilet.

## Get Naloxone

- ▶ Naloxone is available without a prescription from your doctor. Ask your pharmacist today about how you can get **naloxone**, a medicine that can reverse an opioid overdose. To learn more, visit: [preventoverdoseri.org/get-naloxone](http://preventoverdoseri.org/get-naloxone)