

OPIOIDS VERSUS PAIN BLOCKS

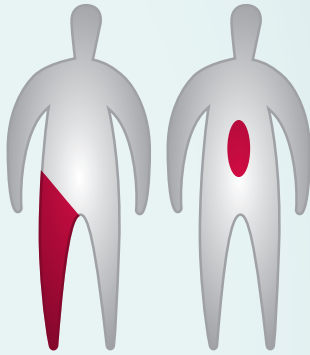
OPIOID USE, EVEN AFTER SURGERY, INCREASES RISK OF ADDICTION.

A pain block can reduce or eliminate your need for opioid medications following surgery.



Opioids

The brain and entire body are affected.



Pain Blocks

Only the area near the surgical site is targeted.



SAFE STORAGE AND DISPOSAL OF UNUSED OPIOIDS

- Keep opioids out of sight and locked up. Don't store them in the bathroom or kitchen.
- Once your surgical pain is manageable without opioids, dispose of any remaining opioid pills by flushing them down the toilet. They will not harm the environment.
- 66 percent of teens who abuse opioids get them from medicine cabinets of family and friends.
- If you believe you may be struggling with addiction, ask your health care provider for guidance or call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's national helpline at 1-800-662-HELP.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Scan the QR code below to learn more about acute pain and how the Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine can help.



UAB Medicine

OPIOIDS & PAIN CONTROL AFTER SURGERY



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THE CDC RECOMMENDS

THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL RECOMMENDS THE LOWEST EFFECTIVE DOSE FOR THE SHORTEST DURATION POSSIBLE.

Three days or less will usually be sufficient; more than seven days will rarely be needed.

Commonly prescribed opioids are:

- Norco (hydrocodone)
- Percocet (oxycodone)
- Ultram (tramadol)
- Tylenol #3 (codeine)



MANAGING YOUR PAIN

ASK ABOUT WAYS TO MANAGE YOUR PAIN THAT DON'T INVOLVE OPIOIDS.

Some of these options may actually work better and have fewer risks and side effects.

Options may include:

- Epidural or spinal anesthesia
- Nerve blocks and catheters
- Tylenol and NSAID medications
 - Ibuprofen, Naproxen
- Nerve pain medications
 - Gabapentin, Pregabalin (Lyrica), Duloxetine (Cymbalta)
- Non-pharmacologic options
 - Physical therapy and structured exercise programs
 - Mindfulness meditation
 - Counseling and pastoral care
 - Music therapy
- Lidocaine patches

Ask your anesthesiologist if a pain block can help you recover.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

AN OVERDOSE OF OPIOIDS CAN CAUSE SLOWED BREATHING AND MAY EVEN CAUSE SUDDEN DEATH.

Factors that increase risk for opioid overdose include:

- History of drug misuse, substance use disorder, or overdose
- Long-term or high-dose opioid use
- Mental health conditions such as depression or anxiety
- Older age (greater than 65 years)
- Obstructive sleep apnea
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- Pregnancy

Avoid taking benzodiazepines or drinking alcohol while taking prescription opioids.

If you have risk factors for an opioid overdose, your anesthesiologist may recommend that you and your family have access to Naloxone for an emergency.

Naloxone is available at most pharmacies and can be life-saving in the event of an accidental opioid overdose.

In the event of an opioid overdose, call 911 and follow instructions for Naloxone administration.