



Safe Medication Practices for Better Health





Be Your Own **Health Advocate**

You are the most important member of your healthcare team. Take the time to become an expert about your medications:

- Learn about your medications - especially the reasons for taking them and what side effects could occur. Use your pharmacist as a trusted resource.
- Keep a complete medication record – this is simply a list of ALL medications you are taking, including those that do not require a prescription.
- If the cost of your prescription is an issue, be sure to talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- Anything you take can impact your medication therapy. Share everything you are taking with your doctor and pharmacist.
- Having a new symptom or health issue? Consider if it could be due to a change in your medications.



Content adapted from Generation Rx's Safe Medication Practices for Better Health Presentation by Ohio State University's College of Pharmacy and The Cardinal Health Foundation.



Follow Safe **Medication Practices**

- 1 Only use prescription medications as directed by a health professional.** Make any changes in your medication therapy only after talking with your doctor or pharmacist.
- 2 Do not share or take someone else's medication,** as individuals can respond to the same medication differently.
- 3 Keep your medications safe:**
 - Store medications in secure locations such as lockboxes, medication safes, or other lockable spaces.
 - Avoid storage places that children or others can easily access, such as drawers, nightstands, or kitchen counters/cabinets.
 - Recall that most people who misuse prescription drugs get them from family members or friends.
 - Dispose of medication properly (see next page).
- 4 Model safe medication practices.**

Be a good example to those around you by modeling these safe medication-taking practices. What others see you do matters.



Know the Risks of **Medication Misuse**

Prescription Drug misuse is:



Taking more of a prescription medication than prescribed.



Taking a prescription medication for a reason different than prescribed.



Sharing or taking someone else's prescription medication.



Safe Medication Disposal



Option 1

Place in drug dropbox
(visit rxdrugdropbox.org).



Option 2

Take advantage of drug
take-back events.



Option 3

Safely dispose in the trash:

Step 1



Mix leftover pills with
unwanted substances like
cat litter or coffee grounds.

Step 2



Throw away the sealed
mixture into the trash.

Step 3



Remove the prescription
label and dispose of the
empty bottle.

LET'S TALK OPIOIDS

What are Prescription Opioids?

- Hydrocodone (Vicodin®)
- Oxycodone (OxyContin®)
- Codeine
- Morphine
- Fentanyl
- Percocet

Facts about Opioids

- Opioids are **narcotic drugs** that act on the nervous system to relieve pain (both illegal drugs and legal drugs by prescription only)
- **Highly addictive** – your body can become dependent on opioids in as little as one prescription cycle.
- **Deadly** – Opioids can stop breathing and stop the heart from beating.
- **A risk for everyone** – Opioids affect all age groups, genders, races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic groups.

Older adults are at higher risk of drug misuse or overdose due to taking more medicines than other age groups and the body's decreased ability to absorb and filter medicines as part of aging.

NARCAN® (naloxone HCl) Nasal Spray is the first and only FDA-approved nasal form of naloxone for the emergency treatment of a known or suspected opioid overdose. Naloxone is available in pharmacies without a prescription.

Discuss with your doctor various treatment options to manage pain—carefully considering all the risks and benefits. Non-opioid alternative pain medicine is available along with physical and behavioral therapy, meditation, yoga, massage, acupuncture, and others that complement healthy lifestyle habits.



Capital Area Human Services provides mental health, addiction recovery (including opioid and heroin addiction) and developmental disability services.

Call **(225) 925-1906** for appointments or visit **realhelpbr.com** for more information.

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