

# Ask Questions



## Before Taking Opioids

**When your prescriber recommends treating your pain with a prescription opioid** such as hydrocodone, oxycodone, codeine, or morphine, **ask if it is right for you and about alternatives.** Additionally you may ask:

### How long should I take this medication?

Ask that your prescriber provide you with the lowest dose and the smallest quantity needed to treat your pain. Ask about a plan for the gradual reduction of opioid use during your prescription.

### How can I reduce the risk of potential side effects from this medication?

Take your medicine exactly as prescribed. Learn about side effects (such as excessive sleepiness or a feeling of craving more of the medication) and when to call your prescriber or go to the hospital.

### What if I have a history of addiction?

Tell your prescriber about any history you or a family member may have had with substance misuse or addiction to drugs or alcohol.

### Can I share this medication?

**No.** What's safe for you might lead to an overdose for someone else.

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### What about the other medications I'm taking?

Tell your prescriber about all of the medicines you are taking, especially those prescribed to treat anxiety, sleeping problems, or seizure and ask about possible interactions.

### How should I store my opioid medicine?

If you have children at home – from a toddler to a teenager – consider a lockbox to secure your medications. Even one accidental dose of opioid medicine meant for an adult can cause a fatal overdose in a child. And people who you'd never expect may look for a chance to steal these medicines.

### What should I do with unused medicine?

Safely dispose of unused medications – especially opioids – by taking advantage of **Project Medicine Drop** or other take-back programs. New Jersey's **Project Medicine Drop** makes it easy to safely and securely dispose of your unused medications and is available 24/7/365. Call **973-504-6263** or visit **[www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/meddrop](http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/meddrop)**.



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[www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/prescribing-for-pain](http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/prescribing-for-pain)