



Patient and Family Communication

Presentation to Scientific Advisory Panel on Opioids

Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada

Sylvia Hyland

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About ISMP Canada

- Independent national not-for-profit organization committed to the advancement of medication safety in all healthcare settings.
- Incorporated in 2000 for the purpose of analysis of medication incidents, sharing learnings, and making recommendations for medication system safeguards.

Aim: Inform Panel Discussions

1. What content should be included in the warning stickers to reflect the risks of overdose and addiction?
2. What key messages should be included in the one to two-page patient handouts to reflect the risks of overdose and addiction?

Outline

5 Questions to Ask about Medications

- Process
- Reach

Opioid handouts

- Process
- Key messages

5 Questions to Ask

- Designed to help initiate 2-way communication about medications
- Feedback: reduces the 'imbalance of knowledge' between healthcare provider and patient/family

Collaborative Process

- Completed environmental scan
- Working group developed draft checklist
- Feedback obtained from patients, clinicians, advisory panel and external stakeholder groups
 - Electronic survey
 - Email
- Checklist revised based on feedback received

Survey Result Highlights

Be an active partner in your health!

5 questions to ask about your medications

Ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist:

1. Have any of my medications **stopped or changed** and why?
2. Can you **review** my medications with me?
3. What **side effects** do I need to watch for?
4. What **tests** do I need to have done?
5. When do I need a **follow-up** appointment?

TIP: Keep your list of allergies and your medication record up to date.

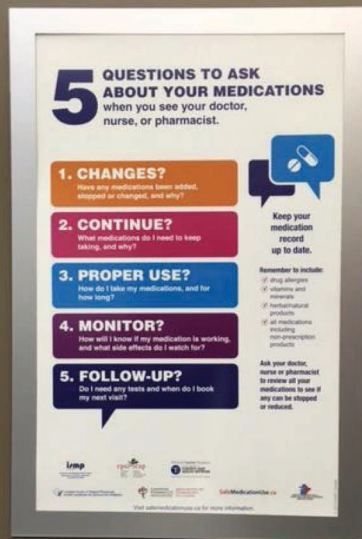
Don't forget to include:

- ✓ vitamins and minerals
- ✓ herbal products
- ✓ puffers, eye drops, patches
- ✓ medications you buy without a prescription

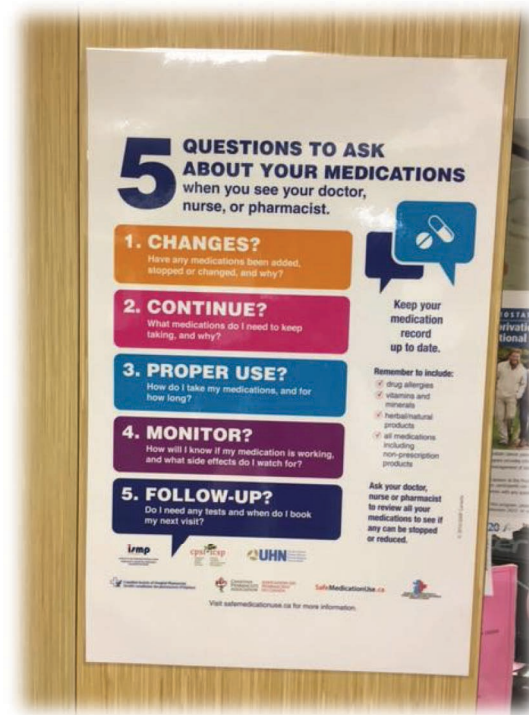
If you have problems or questions, **SPEAK UP** and talk to your family doctor or pharmacist.
Visit SafeMedicationUse.ca for more information and tools on safe medication use.



- December 17–Jan 5, 2016
- Electronic survey sent out to patients and healthcare providers
- 307 responses!
- 52 consumers and 255 healthcare providers
- Responses were thoughtful and eye-opening



Poster inside the elevator
Michael Garron Hospital
(formerly TEGH)



Princess Margaret
Outpatient Pharmacy

Send your photo to medrec@ismp-canada.org

[illegible]

Additional Reach

- Available in 20 languages
- Websites
 - Deprescribing.ca
 - CARP
- Social Media
- E-Learning module
 - RxBriefcase

Opioid Handouts

- Developed in response to learning from medication incidents involving opioids
- Helps answer the '5 Questions to Ask about Medications'
- Reduces the 'imbalance of knowledge' between healthcare provider and patient/family

2-page handout for hospitals

Information for Patients and Families about Opioid Pain Medicines

Opioid medicines are used to treat pain. Opioids are also known as narcotics. These medicines may be needed while you are in hospital and also after you go home. This information sheet will review some important safety information about opioids.

Patients, family members, and other caregivers can play an important role in the safe use of these medicines by becoming better informed.

With opioids there is a fine balance between effective pain control and dangerous side effects.

GOAL
Safe balance between pain control and side effects
Requires regular assessment of opioid effect and need

Pain Management Not Effective Safe Balance Dangerous Side Effects

How is pain assessed?

- Pain scales (e.g., 0 to 10) are often used to help the healthcare team assess pain and monitor the effect of pain medicines.
- Only you can describe the level of pain you are feeling.

Are opioids safe?

Treatment of pain is an important part of the healing process. Many people have used opioids without any problems. However, serious problems, including overdose and addiction, have happened. It is important to use the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible time and to be aware of signs that you are getting too much opioid.

Some people are more sensitive to the side effects of opioids. These people may need a lower starting dose or more careful monitoring. It's important to tell your healthcare team about any health conditions that could increase your risk.

You may be at HIGHER RISK of dangerous side effects if:

- You are older (age greater than 65)
- You have certain health conditions, for example:
 - Sleep apnea
 - Lung disease (e.g., asthma, COPD)
 - Kidney or liver problems
- You are already taking other opioids
- You are taking medicine for anxiety or to help you sleep
- You have never taken opioids before
- You have had a bad reaction to an opioid before

Examples of Opioids	
GENERIC NAME	BRAND NAMES
Codeine	Tylenol #1, 2, 3; Atasol 8, 15, 30
Fentanyl	Duragesic
Hydromorphone	Dilaudid, Hydromorphone
Morphine	Statex, MS Contin, M-Esion
Oxycodone	Percocet, OxyContin, OxyNEO
Tramadol	Tramacet, Ultram, Zydram XL

When should I contact my healthcare team?

Signs that the dose of opioid is too high:

- Severe dizziness
- Inability to stay awake
- Hallucinations
- Heavy or unusual snoring
- Slow breathing rate

Do not take any more opioid medicine and contact your healthcare team right away.

The following side effects happen often with opioids: constipation, nausea, dry mouth, itchiness, sweating, and dizziness. Contact your healthcare team if your side effects are hard to manage.

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What to expect while in HOSPITAL



- Before each dose, your nurse will ask about your pain level and see how sleepy you are. The nurse may also check your breathing and other vital signs such as your pulse, blood pressure and oxygen level.
- Your nurse will come back, usually within an hour, to check on how you are feeling after a dose of opioid. The nurse will ask about your pain level and check your breathing.
- Over the course of the day and night, your nurse will recheck your pain level, sleepiness, breathing and other vital signs.

If an opioid is being given to you through a patient-controlled pump, only YOU are allowed to push the button to administer the pain medicine. This is to prevent an accidental overdose.

Use your call bell to get help right away if you feel:

- Very dizzy
- Very weak
- You are having hallucinations
- Your heart rate is slow or unusual

Or if family members observe:

- You are confused or can't speak clearly
- It is hard to wake you up
- Your lips or fingernails are purple
- You are making unusual heavy snoring, gasping, gurgling or snorting sounds while sleeping
- You are not breathing or have no heartbeat

Additional Information:

Contact Person:

Telephone Number:

All reasonable precautions have been taken to verify this information. The information is shared without warranty or representation of any kind.

What to expect when you go HOME



It is important to be aware of signs of a problem with your opioid dose after you go home. Be sure you understand the plan for pain control before you leave the hospital. If you need opioids for more than a few weeks after leaving hospital, it is important to work closely with your doctor on a plan for longer term pain control.

This medicine was prescribed for you. Never share your opioid medicine with anyone else. Take any unused opioids back to your pharmacy for safe disposal.

Your family member or caregiver needs to call 911 if:

- You can't speak clearly when you wake up
- They can't wake you up
- Your lips or fingernails are blue or purple
- You are making unusual heavy snoring, gasping, gurgling or snorting sounds while sleeping
- You are not breathing or have no heartbeat

Stop taking your opioid medicine and contact your healthcare provider that day if you feel:

- Too sleepy to participate in normal activities (e.g., you fall asleep while eating)
- Very dizzy
- Very weak
- You are having hallucinations
- Your heart rate is slow or unusual

If you cannot reach your doctor or pharmacist, you can call your local poison information centre or health information service for advice.

If you would like to learn more about the safe use of opioids, you can watch a video at: <http://youtu.be/SDMz4lqnpPk>

Never leave a person alone if you are worried about them. Always get help!

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www.ismp-canada.org



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Partnering with Community Pharmacy

Community Pharmacist testing and input:

- 1-page is preferable
- Some graphic designs delay printing from their “middleware”
- Pharmacists use the white space on the handout to write notes or attach their contact information
- Black and white print is preferable

Information for Patients and Families about Opioid Pain Medicines

You have been prescribed an opioid pain medicine that is also known as a narcotic. This leaflet reviews some important safety information about opioids.

Patients, family members, and other caregivers can play an important role in the safe use of these medicines by becoming better informed.

With opioids, there is a fine balance between effective pain control and dangerous side effects.



Safe balance between pain control and side effects
requires regular assessment of opioid effect and need

Opioids are intended to improve your pain enough so that you are able to do your day to day activities, but not reduce your pain to zero. Be sure that you understand your plan for pain control and work closely with your doctor if you need opioids for more than a few weeks.

Risk of overdose and addiction:

Many people have used opioids without problems. However, serious problems, including overdose and addiction, have happened. It is important to follow the instruction on the prescription and use the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible time, and to be aware of signs that you are getting too much opioid.

Side effects:

Constipation, nausea, dry mouth, itchiness, sweating, and dizziness can happen often with opioids. Contact your doctor or pharmacist if your side effects are hard to manage.

Some people are more sensitive to the side effects of opioids and may need a lower starting dose or more careful monitoring. Talk to your doctor about the HIGHER RISK of dangerous side effects if:

- You have certain health conditions, for example:
 - Sleep apnea
 - Lung disease (e.g. COPD or asthma)
 - Kidney or liver problems
- You have never taken opioids before
- You are already taking an opioid or medications for anxiety or to help you sleep
- You have a history of problems with alcohol or other substances
- You have had a bad reaction to an opioid before
- You are age 65 or older

Safe keeping:

Never share your opioid medicine with anyone else. Take any unused opioids back to your pharmacy for safe disposal.

Ask your Pharmacist if you have any questions.

All reasonable precautions have been taken to verify this information. The information is shared without warranty or representation of any kind.

Signs of Overdose

Stop taking the drug and get immediate medical help if you experience the following:

- Severe dizziness
- Inability to stay awake
- Hallucinations
- Heavy or unusual snoring
- Slow breathing rate

Your family member or caregiver needs to call 911 if:

- You can't speak clearly when you wake up
- They can't wake you up
- Your lips or fingernails are blue or purple
- You are making unusual heavy snoring, gasping, gurgling or snorting sounds while sleeping
- You are not breathing or have no heartbeat

Never leave a person alone if you are worried about them.

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Neighbourhood
Pharmacy
Association of Canada

Association canadienne
des pharmacies
de quartier



Institute for Safe Medication
Practices Canada
Institut pour la sécurité des médicaments
aux patients du Canada

PDSA

Additional messages being considered:

- Opioids are one option for controlling pain. Talk to your doctor about non-medication options
- When starting an opioid or after a dose change, your ability to drive or operate machinery may be impaired, so caution is advised. Judgement may also be affected. Avoid making major decisions during this time period.
- Avoid using alcohol or other sedating medications (both prescription and non-prescription) when taking opioids.
- There are immediate release and extended release options for all opioids.

Discussion:

- Parallel initiatives that are complementary can reinforce education
- Staying connected can help evaluate reach, and impact

- The 1-page handout is available from:

<https://www.ismp-canada.org/download/opioid-handout-1page.pdf>

- More information and 2-page handout is available from:

https://www.ismp-canada.org/opioid_stewardship/