Opioids for pain after surgery:
Your questions answered

1. Changes?

You have been prescribed an opioid.
Opioids reduce pain but will not take away all your pain. Ask your prescriber about other methods of reducing pain including using ice, stretching, physiotherapy, or non-opioid drugs like acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Know your pain control plan and work closely with your prescriber if your pain does not improve.

2. Continue?

Opioids are usually required for less than 1 week after surgery.
As you continue to recover from your surgery, your pain should get better day by day. As you get better, you will need less opioids. Consult your healthcare provider about how and when to reduce your dose.

3. Proper Use?

Use the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible time.
Overdose and addiction can occur with opioids. Avoid alcohol and sleeping pills (e.g. benzodiazepines like lorazepam) while taking opioids. Do not drive while taking opioids.

4. Monitor?

Side effects include: sedation, constipation, nausea and dizziness.
Contact your healthcare provider if you have severe dizziness or inability to stay awake.

5. Follow-Up?

Ask your prescriber when your pain should get better.
If your pain is not improving as expected, talk to your healthcare provider.

To find out more, visit: **OpioidStewardship.ca** and **DeprescribingNetwork.ca**

It is important to:

Never share your opioid medication with anyone else.

Store your opioid medication in a secure place; out of reach and out of sight of children, teens and pets.

Ask about other options available to treat pain.

Take unused medications back to a pharmacy for safe disposal. Talk with your pharmacist if you have questions. For locations that accept returns: ☎ 1-844-535-8889 🔗 healthsteward.ca

Did you know?

About 16 Canadians are hospitalized each day with opioid poisoning.
— Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2017

Examples of opioids used for pain after surgery:

hydromorphone   morphine   codeine   oxycodone   tramadol

Notes:

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

Canadian Deprescribing Network

cpsi icsp
Canadian Patient Safety Institute
Institut canadien pour la sécurité des patients

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CADTH

Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists
Société canadienne des pharmaciens d'hôpitaux

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