

Opioid Safety – Know the Facts

Use your opioid safely:

- Do not mix opioids with alcohol, or any illicit substance or drug. Do not take them with other medicines that can make you sleepy. This can increase your risk of death.
- Only use your opioids for pain. Do not use your pills for other reasons.
- Your opioids are only for you. Do not share them. Sharing or selling opioids is against the law.
- Even when used correctly, opioids can cause dependence, tolerance, withdrawal and death.

You are at risk for addiction if you:

- Experience or have had depression, anxiety, or mental illness.
- Use or abuse alcohol, tobacco or drugs or have a family history of alcohol or drug abuse.
- Have long term pain.
- Take an opioid for more than a week.
- Take more pills, more often, than your doctor prescribed.
- Were sexually abused as a child.

If you are or could become pregnant, taking an opioid may harm your baby. Possible risks include:

- Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome. Your baby shows signs of withdrawing from drugs. Signs are irritability, seizures, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and poor feeding.
- Birth Defects. Serious problems with the way your baby's brain, spine, heart, stomach, or intestines may develop. Some of these problems would require long-term care for your baby.
- Stillbirth. Death of the baby after 20 or more weeks.
- Preterm delivery. A birth before your baby is fully developed.

Medicine Safety

Safe Use of Medicine

- Follow the directions on the medicine label.
- If you don't understand the directions, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist to help you.
- Keep a list of all the medicines, vitamins, minerals, and herbs you take. Share this list with your doctor at your next visit.

Safe Medicine Storage

- Keep drugs in the bottle they came in.
- Keep the container in a cool, dry place. Keep it out of reach of children and pets.
- Do not store your medicines in places that allow easy access to your pills. (For example, on your kitchen counter.)
- Try to keep a count of how many pills you have left.

Safe Disposal of Medicine

- Find a Michigan household drug take back site near you. For a list of sites, visit michigan.gov/deqdrugdisposal or Michigan-OPEN.org/takebackmap.
- Look for drop boxes at pharmacies and police stations.
- Use the recipe below to dispose of expired, unused or unwanted drugs at home.
 1. Mix drugs (do not crush) with dirt, kitty litter, or used coffee grounds and add a small amount of water to dissolve any solid medicines.
 2. Seal drugs in plastic bag.
 3. Place plastic bag in trash.
 4. Scratch out personal information on prescription bottle and throw it away.