

Emergency Department Pain Control

General Information

Pain is an unpleasant feeling that is conveyed to the brain as a result of injury or disease. Most pain can be managed at home using over the counter analgesic (pain reducing) medications from a pharmacy, which do not require a prescription. If it is expected that over-the-counter drugs will not provide relief or you have already attempted them prior to attending the emergency, a doctor may prescribe stronger medications or provide you with a small amount to take home with you.

The goal of pain control is to reduce pain enough to allow you to complete your basic daily functions. Although resting for short periods can alleviate pain, too much rest may actually increase pain and put you at greater risk of injury when you again attempt movement.

Instructions

Step 1: Think about how much pain you have (Not Too Bad, Medium, Very Bad)

Step 2: Pick the box that matches your pain level

Step 3: Follow the instructions in that box until your pain changes

Step 4: If your pain changes, change to another box and follow the instructions

NOT TOO BAD PAIN

Take both medications. Follow the instructions carefully.

- **Ibuprofen** (also called Advil or Motrin) ____ mg every 6 hours for next 24 hours (while awake) even if pain is settling down. Then take every 6 hours ONLY if needed. Get it from a pharmacy or grocery store, does not need a prescription. **Take with 500ml water. Hard on your stomach if you take too long.**
- **Acetaminophen** (also called Tylenol) ____ mg every 6 hours for next 24 hours (while awake) even if pain is settling down. Then take every 6 hours ONLY if needed. Get it from a pharmacy or grocery store, does not need a prescription. **DO NOT take this if you are taking Tylenol #3.**

MEDIUM PAIN

Take both medications. Follow the instructions carefully.

- **Ibuprofen** (also called Advil or Motrin) ____ mg every 6 hours for next 24 hours (while awake) even if pain is settling down. Then take every 6 hours ONLY if needed. Get it from a pharmacy or grocery store, does not need a prescription. **Take with 500ml water. Hard on your stomach if you take too long.**
- (Prescription / Provided) **Tylenol #3 (w/Codeine)** ____ Tablet(s) every ____ hours for next 24 hours (while awake) even if pain is settling down. Then take every 4–6 hours ONLY if needed. **May cause drowsiness: no driving/participating in any activity requiring focus & alertness.** May cause constipation (see attached instruction for preventing constipation).

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VERY BAD PAIN

Take both **Ibuprofen** and either **Oxycodone** or **Hydromorphone** (As indicated).
Follow the instructions carefully.

- **Ibuprofen** (also called Advil or Motrin) _____mg every 6 hours for next 24 hours (while awake) even if pain is settling down. Then take every 6 hours ONLY if needed. Get it from a pharmacy or grocery store, does not need a prescription. **Take with 500ml water. Hard on your stomach if you take too long.**
- (Prescription / Provided) **Oxycodone** _____mg every _____hours when needed. May cause drowsiness: no driving or participating in any activity requiring focus and alertness. May cause constipation (see attached instruction for preventing constipation).
- (Prescription / Provided) **Hydromorphone** _____mg every _____hours when needed. May cause drowsiness: no driving or participating in any activity requiring focus and alertness. May cause constipation (see attached instruction for preventing constipation).

Contact your Family Doctor for the following:

- Pain becomes too bad.
- You require more prescriptions for pain medications.
- You have constipation that is unmanaged using the constipation prevention instructions.

For more information or questions contact **HealthLinkBC** at **811**.

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