



Ohio Opiate Initiatives: Acute Pain Management

Effective August 31, 2017, Ohio's health care regulatory boards have implemented new limits on prescriptions issued for the treatment of acute pain. The rules are intended to treat conditions resulting in acute pain, including those that normally fade with healing such as a surgical procedure or a bone fracture.

Ohio's new opiate prescribing limits for acute pain include:

1. No more than seven days of opiates can be prescribed for adults
2. No more than five days of opiates can be prescribed for minors
3. Health care providers can prescribe opiates in excess of the day supply limits only if they provide a specific reason in the patient's medical record. Unless such a reason is given, a health care provider is prohibited from prescribing opiates that exceed Ohio's limits;
4. Except for certain conditions specified in the rules, the total morphine equivalent dose (MED) of a prescription for acute pain cannot exceed an average of 30 MED per day;
5. The new limits do not apply to opioids prescribed for cancer, palliative care, end-of-life/hospice care or medication-assisted treatment for addiction.

How to stay safe: Prevention & Precaution Practices

If prescribed an opioid, take the following precautions:

- You, and parents if applicable, should talk about the risks with your doctor and ask about any alternative treatments, such as non-pharmacological treatments
- Take your medication(s) exactly as prescribed. If pain persists, you should make an appointment with your doctor and not take more of your medication(s)
- If you have a history of a substance use disorder or mental illness, tell your doctor, as these can increase your risk for dependence or addiction
- Do not give your medication(s) to anyone else. This is dangerous and illegal!
- If you have leftover medication(s), certain law enforcement agencies and pharmacies in Ohio offer drug disposal boxes to collect and dispose of unwanted or expired prescription medications. To locate the closest drug disposal box, visit: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/disposal
- Opioid medication should never be combined with alcohol; combining them increases the risk of overdose and death