MANAGING PAIN
AFTER DENTAL TREATMENT

Pain after a procedure is normal. Our goal is to help you safely manage your pain to a comfortable level.

YOUR DENTIST WANTS TO KEEP YOU SAFE.

TELL HIM/HER ABOUT YOUR USE OF:
• Prescription pain medications
• Benzodiazepines (Valium, Xanax, Klonopin)
• Sedatives (Ambien, Seroquel)
• Stimulants (Ritalin, Adderall)
• Antidepressants (Prozac, Celexa)
• Over-the-counter medications, vitamins or herbals
• Recreational drugs (CBD, marijuana, etc.)

ALSO SHARE ANY HISTORY OF:
• Substance use disorder including alcohol and tobacco
• Mood disorder (Depression, bipolar disorder)
• Anxiety
• Chronic pain
• Sleep apnea
• Breathing problems

Women should tell their dentist if they are pregnant.

Dentist’s Name

Dentist’s Phone Number

Nearest Drop-off Site

NC Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health • Oral Health Section
https://publichealth.nc.gov/oralhealth/
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What is an opioid? An opioid is a strong prescription pain medication with risk of misuse, abuse and addiction. Most dental procedures do not require opioids for post-operative pain.

**DENTAL PAIN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. **How long should I expect to have pain?**
   Most patients are pain free three days after their dental procedures.

2. **Can I use over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil)?** Yes, if you appropriately use them for other pain issues, you should be able to use them for dental pain.

3. **What other things can I do to help manage my pain?**
   Ice, rest, dietary restrictions/soft foods, salt water rinses, relaxation, meditation, massage and music can help control your pain.

4. **Who do I call if my pain is not controlled, getting worse, or I am having side effects from my medications?** Call the office and share your concerns so we can address them together.

**COMMON NAMES OF PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS:**
- Hydrocodone (Vicodin, Norco)
- Oxycodone (Percocet, OxyContin)
- Morphine
- Codeine (Tylenol #3, Tylenol #4)
- Fentanyl
- Tramadol (Ultram)

**SOME POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF OPIOID USE INCLUDE:**
- nausea
- vomiting
- sleepiness
- dizziness
- constipation

**KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT OPIOID ADDICTION**
You are at higher risk of developing a dependence or an addiction to opioids if you:
- Have a history of depression or anxiety.
- Have a history of using or abusing alcohol, tobacco, or drugs (including prescription or street drugs).
- Have a history of long-term (chronic) pain.
- Take opioids for longer than a week.
- Take more pills, more often, than your dentist prescribed.

**USING OPIOIDS SAFELY**
- Use opioid medications as prescribed and for severe pain only.
- As your pain gets better, wait longer between doses.
- Store your opioids in a secure out-of-sight location.
- Do not mix opioids with alcohol or other medications that can cause drowsiness.
- Do not share the pills with others.

**PROMPTLY DISPOSE OF UNUSED OPIOIDS**
- Search “Operation Medicine Drop” online to locate permanent drop box sites or a take back event near you.
- Mix drugs (do not crush) with used coffee grounds or kitty litter in a plastic bag, then throw away.