

MANAGING PAIN AFTER SURGERY

After surgery, you may have some pain and discomfort. This is normal and part of the healing process. The pain is the worst in the first one or two days after surgery, but it will get better over time.

There are many ways your health care team can help manage your pain. Talk with your health care providers to decide what is right for you.

PAIN MEDICATIONS

Some medications that treat short-term pain are:

- Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil)
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- Naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn)
- Celecoxib (Celebrex)
- Diclofenac (Voltaren) pill or gel
- Diclofenac patch (Flector)
- Lidocaine patch
- Gabapentin (Neurontin)

OTHER PAIN TREATMENTS

For continued pain, there are other things you can do to help, such as:

- Meditation and yoga
- Gentle stretching and exercise (check with your doctor)
- Physical therapy
- Acupuncture
- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Ice, compression, elevation

OPIOID PAINKILLERS

Your doctor may prescribe opioid painkillers, such as Percocet, Vicodin and Oxycontin. These can help reduce pain after surgery, but they are also risky and can lead to addiction and overdose.

If you are prescribed opioid painkillers, you should:

- Only take them if you still have severe pain after taking other medications such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen.
- Avoid taking them with alcohol or prescription medications used to treat anxiety, such as Xanax or Valium.
- Keep them in a locked cabinet and get rid of pills that you don't use.

Getting rid of unused medications

You may not need all the pills that are being prescribed to you. When your pain has gotten better, you should get rid of your unused medications. This can prevent other people from using them. Drug disposal boxes can be found at many pharmacies and police stations. You can find the one closest to you at: <http://bit.ly/PADrugDisposal>