

## Pain Management

The goal of post-operative pain management is *pain control*, not *pain elimination*. You should expect some pain after surgery. This pain helps your body protect itself while it is healing. Your pain management program, however, should provide adequate pain relief after surgery. Keep in mind that every patient is different, and adjustments may have to be made.

### Definitions

***Narcotic:*** This is a very strong opioid-based medication that works on pain receptors. Examples include Norco, Vicodin, Percocet, or Oxycontin. While these drugs are safe if used correctly, they are also addictive and are one of the leading causes of inadvertent deaths in the United States. Many narcotics contain Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and can cause liver failure if too much is taken. **DO NOT TAKE MORE MEDICATION THAN PRESCRIBED.**

Narcotic medication is for pain only. It does not help your body heal. You do not need to take narcotics if your pain is controlled with other medications.

Common side effects of narcotics include upset stomach, confusion, constipation, sleep disturbance and dependency.

We recommend plenty of water as well as fruits and vegetables to minimize constipation. If your symptoms persist, over the counter stool softeners can be purchased at your local pharmacy. These include Colace, Senekot, Milk of Magnesia or Dulcolax.

***Non-steroid Anti-Inflammatory Drug (NSAID):*** These medications are designed to reduce pain and control inflammation. Examples include Ibuprofen (Advil), Celebrex, Mobic or Toradol. This is a very important component of your post-operative pain control. Please make sure you take this in conjunction with your other medications.

Common side effects of NSAIDs include upset stomach or gastrointestinal (GI) bleeding. *Please let Dr. Abrams know if you have a history of GI bleeding or NSAID allergy.*

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***Hypnotic:*** This is usually a sleeping pill and is NOT commonly prescribed by Dr. Abrams after surgery. This type of medication is also addictive and you should take it only if absolutely necessary.

You will only receive enough narcotic medication to manage your pain through the first phase of your recovery, which usually lasts approximately 1-2 weeks. The later phases will be managed with non-narcotic medications. If you continue to require narcotic medication, you will be referred to a pain management clinic.

### *Medication Refill Policies*

- Refill requests should be made during regular business hours and will be processed within 24 hours of request
- *Narcotic pain medication will not be prescribed at night or on weekends.* Please plan ahead if you are concerned about your supply.
- Narcotics will be administered post-operatively by Dr. Abrams only (unless patient is receiving care from a pain management physician)
- Patients must indicate if receiving narcotics from any other physician. A treatment plan for refills should be discussed with Dr. Abrams