

SEPTEMBER



NEWSLETTER



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Be Well Aware – Health Article



Safe Use of Opioids

[How to plan for the safe use of opioids](#)

The best time to plan for a safe use of opioids is before you start using the medication. Putting in precautionary measures is key to making sure the use does not become the highly addictive habit as it has for so many around the world. “After just five days of prescription opioid use, the likelihood that you’ll develop long-term dependence on these drugs rises steeply – increasing your risk of an overdose.”

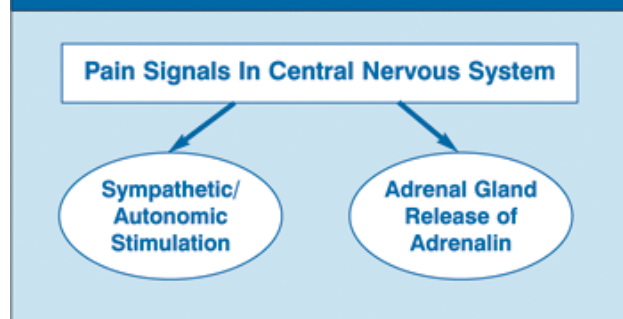
A few things to consider prior to starting the use of opioids should include your medical history, family history and any history of substance abuse. Being honest with yourself and your physician about any abuse in your history, alcohol use and illegal substances can be the few factors you need to keep yourself safe.

Your doctor should be following the guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and should prescribe the lowest dose for the shortest time period possible, when dealing or treating pain. In addition to setting a realistic treatment goal with your physician you should also sign an

agreement with your physician and schedule regular checkups. If you are experiencing any side effects, such as constipation, nausea or mood changes you should report this directly to your physician or health care team. If a loved one is currently taking opioids you should look for any signs of trouble.

- Taking pain medication “just in case”, especially when no pain exists
- Borrowing medication from other people
- Taking more than the prescribed dose
- Mood changes

FIGURE 1. How Pain Causes Hypertension and Tachycardia



Possible negative outcomes of opioid use

There are a variety of possible cardiac problems associated with opioids; including bradycardia, which is a slow heart rate and can lead to poor exercise tolerance. You become fatigued more quickly, not allowing your body to get the full benefits of the exercises you are performing.

Vasodilation, or dilation of the blood vessels, is also a possible outcome of being on opioids, which can lead to a sudden drop in blood pressure. As you work out, your entire body needs to be supplied with blood and the nutrients in which it carries in order to keep performance up and with a sudden drop in blood pressure your body will struggle to provide you with what is needed. Other dangers associated with vasodilation include dizziness and possibly passing out due to an inadequate amount of blood reaching the brain. In addition to these possible cardiac problems, the biggest and most severe is cardiovascular death.

Opioid	Blood pressure	heart rate	PAD
Morphine	↓	↓ / -	↓ / 0
Buprenorphine	↓	↓ / -	-
Pentazocine	(↑)	(↑)	↑
Nalbuphine	-	↓	-
Meperidine	(↓)	↓ / - / ↑	-
Piritramid	(↓)	-	-
Fentanyl	↓	↓	-

Safety precautions while on opioids

Once you and your doctor have decided that opioids are right for your pain and you are looking to stay active, there are some steps you would want to take to help minimize the risk of injury while exercising.

- Substitute activities that require less exertion
- Choose activities that involve less impact
- Use exercise machines
- Reduce workout time
- Monitor changes in heart rate and blood pressure during and after exercise

How to dispose of opioids

Disposing of your unused opioids immediately after treatment is a big factor in making sure you are not tempted to use them again. Do not give any unused medications to your friends and also do not just throw them away; as even one dose could be fatal if given to the wrong person. There may be some organizations that have an authorized take-back program to help dispose of any unused opioids, however, if this is not a program available to you then flushing any unused opioids should be considered, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). If you are unsure of which medication can be flushed, you should check on the FDA's flush list.

References

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/prescription-drug-abuse/in-depth/how-to-use-opioids-safely/art-20360373>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/consumer-health/in-depth/opioids-and-exercise/art-20396866>

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/can-opioids-cause-heart-problems-4134144>

Exercise of the Month



Bone Density Building Exercise

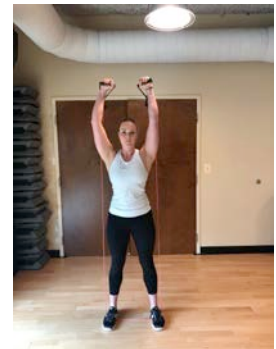
Purpose: Bone mass peaks during the third decade of life in most people. Women and men older than age 30 can help prevent bone loss with regular exercise. Weight-bearing and resistance exercises are the best for your bones.

Target Muscles: Gluteus Maximus, Erector Spinae, Quadriceps, Obliques, Deltoids, Triceps, Trapezius, and Hip Abductors

Equipment Needed: Handle Bar Bands

Movement:

- Movement 1:
 - Squat and Press:
 - Place the resistance band under your heels hip width apart and grab the handles with both hands holding at the shoulders
 - Lower yourself into a classic squat, keeping hands at shoulder level. Return to standing position and press arms overhead
- Movement 2:
 - X Step:
 - Take the resistance band and step on it with both of your feet and then cross it over and hold the other end of it with your hands. (band should resemble the figure of an X)
 - Bend slightly at the knees and move your feet so that they are slightly wider than shoulder width apart
 - Shuffle your feet sideways to the right for the desired amount of steps and then shuffle back to left.



Health-Full Eating & Nutrition



How Nutritional Needs Change With Age

Caloric needs are determined by several factors such as height, weight, gender activity level, and age. As we age, our bodies undergo internal changes. One of those changes include a slowing metabolism and as metabolism slows, energy expenditure decreases. Metabolic rate is thought to decrease about one to two percent per decade. After age 45, the average person loses an estimated 1 percent of muscle mass each year. Although calorie requirements can diminish with age, nutrient requirements can often stay the same or even increase. For instance, a 19 year old should aim to get 15 micrograms of vitamin D per day; a 70 year old should aim for that same daily amount.

Fortunately, there are things that you can do to help prevent nutrient deficiencies. The goal is to consume a diet that is filled with nutrient-dense foods, such as vegetables, fruit, low-fat dairy, whole grains, legumes, nuts, seeds and lean protein (fish, chicken, beef). These foods range in caloric density (vegetables-low, nuts-high), but for the most part are on the lower end of the range. These foods are also high in water and/or fiber, which make them more satisfying and help to aid in hydration and digestion.



It is also a good idea to talk to your doctor about changes in nutrient requirements as we age. If your diet is not providing the right amount of nutrients, your doctor may suggest changes to your diet. You may even want to ask for a referral to a Dietitian/Nutritionist to learn about food choices and if supplements might be appropriate.

Although there is a natural decline in metabolism, these changes are minimal compared to the changes that we can control. A large factor in an age-related metabolic decline is a decrease in activity level. As we get older, we tend to move less. Less activity causes muscle mass to diminish and therefore metabolism slows. We have the power to slow these effects by keeping a regular fitness routine. The earlier you adopt an active and healthy lifestyle, the more likely that you will maintain a healthy lifestyle in later years.