

## Medications and Refill Instructions

This handout will help you understand the medications you may be prescribed to take after surgery. Please take all medications as prescribed by your surgeon. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these medications, please contact your surgeon.

### **Acetaminophen (Tylenol)**

Acetaminophen is used to relieve mild to moderate pain from headaches, muscle aches and backaches and is used to reduce fever. Acetaminophen can also be used to relieve the pain from osteoarthritis. Acetaminophen is in a class of medication called analgesic (pain relievers) and antipyretics (fever reducers). It works by changing the way the body senses pain and by cooling the body.

Taking too much acetaminophen can cause serious liver damage. To be sure you take acetaminophen safely, you should:

- Not take more than one medication containing acetaminophen at a time.
- Take acetaminophen only as directed by the physician.
- Not take more than 4000 mg of acetaminophen daily.
- Stop taking acetaminophen if you think you have taken too much.

### **NSAID's (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs)**

These medications block the production of certain body chemicals that cause pain and inflammation. It can be used to relieve certain types of short term pain caused by injuries, surgery or other medical procedures or conditions, such as osteoarthritis and back pain. Some common NSAID's include Advil, Motrin and Aleve.

Side effects of NSAID's may include:

- Nausea, headache, anorexia, abdominal pain, dizziness or drowsiness

Take only as directed by the physician. This medication should be taken with food.

## **Narcotics**

Narcotics are used to control moderate to severe pain following surgery. Your physician may prescribe one of several types of pain medications for a short period after your surgery.

All narcotic pain medications have 3 common side effects. These include:

- GI Upset
- Constipation
- Sedation

To help alleviate or prevent these side effects, be sure to take your medication with food. Increase fluid and high fiber food intake, and do not consume alcohol while taking narcotic medications.

Some commonly prescribed narcotics include:

### **Oxycodone**

Oxycodone is used to relieve moderate to severe pain. Oxycodone is in a class of medication called opiate (narcotic) analgesics. It acts on the central nervous system to relieve pain.

Oxycodone, when used for a long time, may become habit forming, causing mental and physical dependence. Use only as directed for acute pain.

Do not drink alcohol or drive while taking this medication.

### **Hydrocodone with Acetaminophen (Norco/Vicodin)**

Hydrocodone is used to relieve severe pain. Hydrocodone is in a class of medication called opiate (narcotic) analgesics. It works by changing the way your brain and nervous system respond to pain.

Hydrocodone can be habit forming with prolonged use. Use only as directed for breakthrough pain.

This medication also contains acetaminophen. Please validate that you are not taking more than 4000 mg of acetaminophen daily.

Do not drink alcohol or drive while taking this medication.

## **Tramadol**

Tramadol is used to relieve moderate to moderately severe pain. Tramadol is in a class of medication called opiate (narcotic) analgesics. It works by changing the way your brain and nervous system respond to pain.

Tramadol may be habit forming with prolonged use. Use only as directed for breakthrough pain.

Do not drink alcohol or drive while taking this medication.

### **Medication Side Effects:**

As with all medications, do not take a medication if you have an allergy to the medication or if you develop any serious side effects from the medication.

Serious side effects may include, but are not limited to:

- Rash, itching or hives
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Difficulty breathing or swallowing
- Swelling of the face, eyes, lips, tongue or throat
- Changes in heartbeat
- Chest pain

If you develop any serious side effects, stop taking the medication and call your surgeon's office.



## PRESCRIPTION REFILL INSTRUCTIONS

- Some prescriptions cannot be called into a pharmacy and must be picked up in person at your physician's office.
- Use narcotic pain medications only as needed, and wean off narcotic pain medication as quickly as possible. Transition to Tylenol, Motrin or Aleve as soon as possible if still needing pain medication.
- Please remember that requests for medication refills should be called to the physician's office during normal business hours. Those hours are Monday – Thursday 8:00am – 4:00pm and Friday 8:00am – 12:00pm (noon). **No refills will be authorized outside of these times.**
- Do not wait until you are completely out of medication before you call.
- Please have the name of the medication, dosage, and the pharmacy name and phone number when you call.
- Plan ahead and allow 24 business hours for refills.

