



What to Know About Prescription Opioids

Which medications are prescription opioids?

- ✓ Prescription opioids are narcotic pain medications that are prescribed for people with moderate to severe pain. They include Vicodin, OxyContin, Oxycodone, Percocet, Fentanyl, Opana, and codeine.

What should parents or guardians do if prescription pain medication is recommended for the injured athlete?

- ✓ Talk openly with the health care provider about the need for prescription pain medicine. Make sure to ask about possible risks and side effects, alternative options that may exist, precautions, and proper use of the medication.
- ✓ If anyone in the family has had problems with prescription drugs, alcohol, or any other drugs, let the doctor know.
- ✓ Be sure that the athlete takes the medication only as prescribed and uses only the minimal amount for the shortest period needed for effective relief.
- ✓ Keep control of the medication bottle, and supervise the athlete when he or she is taking the medication. Do not allow the athlete to self-administer. Count the pills or keep track of the amount of medicine in the bottle on a regular basis.
- ✓ Keep the medication at home, if possible. If the athlete needs to take medication during the school day, the school (by law) must approve its use. Talk with school staff about

proper supervision, and follow the necessary protocols.

- ✓ Remind the athlete that prescription medication is only good for the person it is prescribed for and that it could seriously hurt others.
- ✓ Be sure that the athlete takes the medication no longer than necessary.

How should prescription medications be stored?

- ✓ Don't keep prescription medicine in the medicine cabinet. It is best to keep all medicine in a locked cabinet or box that youth cannot access.
- ✓ Ask anyone that children and teens may visit to lock up their medicine or keep them in a safe place.
- ✓ Talk to the parents of your teenager's friends, and encourage them to secure their prescriptions.

TO DISPOSE OF UNUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS:

The best way to dispose of unneeded medication is to bring them to a temporary or permanent DEA-registered disposal site right away. Check www.mass.gov/DrugDropbox to see if there is a permanent waste medication collection site near your town or city. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) periodically hosts National Prescription Drug Take-Back events where temporary collection sites are set up in commu-



nities nationwide for safe disposal of prescriptions. It should be noted, however, that a small number of medicines have specific directions to immediately flush them down the toilet when they are no longer needed and a take-back option is not readily available.

List of medicines recommended for disposal by flushing when take-back options are not readily available

This list from the FDA tells you which medicines you should flush when they are no longer needed and take-back options are not readily available.

There are some medicines that, when not disposed of properly, can pose significant risks. For example, patients using fentanyl patches should immediately flush their used or unneeded patches down the toilet. When powerful medicines such as these patches are disposed down the toilet, you help to keep others safe by ensuring these medicines are not misused or accidentally ingested or touched. Blue links in the Brand Name list below direct you to medicine information for consumers that includes specific disposal instructions.

Active Ingredient	Found in Brand Names
Benzhydrocodone / Acetaminophen	Apadaz
Buprenorphine	Belbuca , Bunavail , Butrans , Suboxone , Subutex , Zubsolv
Fentanyl	Abstral , Actiq , Duragesic , Fentora , Onsolis
Diazepam	Diastat/Diastat AcuDial rectal gel
Hydrocodone	Anexsia , Hysingla ER , Lortab , Norco , Reprexain , Vicodin , Vicoprofen , Zohydro ER
Hydromorphone	Dilaudid , Exalgo
Meperidine	Demerol
Methadone	Dolophine , Methadose
Methylphenidate	Daytrana transdermal patch system
Morphine	Arymo ER , Embeda , Kadian , Morphabond ER , MS Contin , Avinza
Oxycodone	Combunox , Oxaydo (formerly Oxecta), OxyContin , Percocet , Percodan , Roxicet , Roxicodone , Targiniq ER , Xartemis XR , Xtampza ER , Roxybond
Oxymorphone	Opana , Opana ER
Tapentadol	Nucynta , Nucynta ER
Sodium Oxybate	Xyrem oral solution

The FDA believes that the known risk of harm, including death, to humans from accidental exposure to the medicines listed above, especially potent opioid medicines, far outweighs any potential risk to humans or the environment from flushing these medicines. The FDA will continue to conduct risk assessments as a part of larger activities related to the safe use of medicines.

For disposal information, specific to another medication you are taking please visit [Drugs@FDA](#). Once there, type in the medication name and click on search. Then click on the label section for that specific medication. Select the most recent label and search for the term “disposal.”

Disposal in the household trash

If no take-back programs or DEA-registered collectors are available in your area, and there are no specific disposal instructions in the product package insert, such as flushing described above, you can also follow these simple steps to dispose of most medicines in the household trash:

- ✓ Mix medicines (do not crush tablets or capsules) with an unpalatable substance such as dirt, cat litter, or used coffee grounds;
- ✓ Place the mixture in a container such as a sealed plastic bag;



- ✓ Throw the container in your household trash; and
- ✓ Delete all personal information on the prescription label of empty pill bottles or medicine packaging, then dispose of the container.

For additional information, see [Medication Disposal: Questions and Answers](#).

DISPOSE OF UNUSED MEDICATION SAFELY

Check www.mass.gov/DrugDropbox to see if there is a permanent waste medication collection site in your town or city that you can go to right away.
