Why Were You Prescribed Opioids?

Prescription opioids can be used to treat moderate-to-severe pain and are often prescribed following surgery or injury, or for severe health conditions determined by your doctor.

In recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in the acceptance and use of prescription opioids for the treatment of chronic, non-cancer pain, such as back pain or osteoarthritis, despite serious risks and the lack of evidence about their long-term effectiveness.

What to Do if You're Prescribed Opioids?

- Understand that prescription opioids can be helpful as well as addictive and dangerous.
- Ask if what you are being prescribed is an opioid and, if so, if there are non-addictive alternatives available.
- If possible, consider using alternatives such as physical therapy, massage, acupuncture or over-the-counter medications.
- If alternatives are not available, use your prescription as directed by your doctor and only when necessary.
- Store properly. Dispose safely.

PRESCRIPTION PAIN MEDICATION

GUIDE, Inc.
750 South Perry Street
Suite 310
Lawrenceville, GA 30046
678-377-4131
prevention@guideinc.org

If you know someone who is struggling with opioid or prescription pain medication misuse or addictions, please visit guideinc.org/rxresources.

What Supporters of Student-Athletes Need to Know

Scan for List of Resources
guideinc.org/rxresources

To see the list of sources used in the creation of this brochure, scan code or visit guideinc.org/rxresources.
Opioids are a class of drugs used to reduce pain.

Prescription Opioids can be prescribed by doctors to treat moderate to severe pain, but can also have serious risks and side effects. Common types are oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), morphine and methadone.

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid pain reliever. It is 80-100X more potent than other opioids and approved for treating severe pain, typically advanced cancer pain.

Heroin is an illegal opioid. Prescription opioids can be a "gateway drug" to heroin when prescriptions expire or are discontinued.

How Do I Advocate for My Student-Athlete?

- Ask how the opioid will react with already prescribed medication to avoid adverse reactions.
- Ask about alternatives including other, non-opioid medications.
- Know your student-athlete is predisposed to addiction if s/he has...
  - a family or personal history of alcohol, tobacco or substance misuse.
  - mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, attention-deficit/ hyperactivity disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.
- Know that you can refuse a prescription if you do not want it.

Your Student-Athlete is Injured. What's next?

- Seek medical treatment or evaluation immediately.
- If prescription opioids are necessary, educate yourself about the prescription.
- Use opioid medication correctly and for short-term use.
- Involve coaches for support and guidance for a healthy recovery.
- Engage in alternatives for pain relief such as physical therapy.

The risks of using opioids include misuse, opioid use disorder/addiction, overdose or even death.

Opioid misuse can lead to poor decision making, loss of friends and increased family stress.

Student-athletes who misuse opioids can lose their spot on their sports team, fall behind in class and lose scholarships.

Keep in contact with doctors and the team’s athletic trainers
- Use your prescription only as directed by a doctor
- Complete any therapy or exercises outlined by doctors