

Understanding

Opioid medicines

COMMON BRAND NAMES

Oxycodone (Endone, Oxycontin) Morphine (MS-Contin, Kapanol), Fentanyl (Durogesic, Denpax), codeine, hydromorphone (Jurnista, Dilaudid), tapentadol (Palexia), tramadol (Tramal), buprenorphine (Suboxone, Norspan) and methadone (Physeptone)



What are opioids?

Opioids are a group of strong medicines that are used for managing pain. Opioids can be useful in managing strong or cancer-related pain.

Taking these medicines safely

If you have been prescribed one of these medicines:

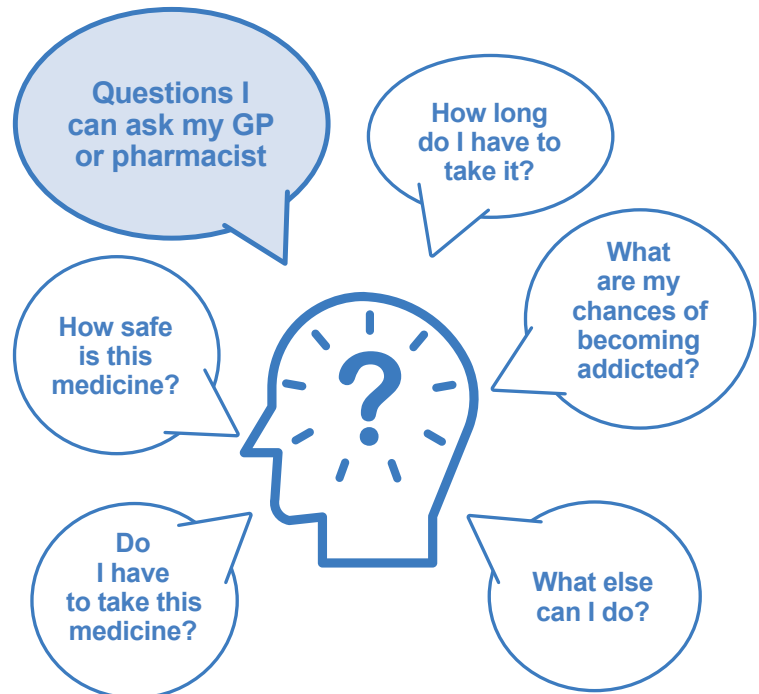
- Only take the dose prescribed for you
- Don't share your medicine with anyone
- Check with your GP or pharmacist before using other medicines
- Let your pharmacist or GP know if you experience side effects such as memory loss, confusion, breathing problems, daytime sedation, anxiety, mood changes, constipation, balance problems, falls and dry mouth
- Talk to your GP, pharmacist or other health professional if you find the opioid medicine no longer helps to control your symptoms.

How would I know if I am having problems with this medicine?

Possible signs of dependence:

- Taking the medicine in larger amounts or for longer than you're meant to
- Not being able to cut down or stop using the medicine

- Having cravings and urges to use the medicine
- Not managing to do what you should at work, home, or school because of your use of the medicine
- Its use causes problems in relationships
- Repeatedly using the medicine, even when it puts you in danger
- Needing more of the medicine to get the effect you want (eg. developing a tolerance)
- Having withdrawal symptoms that can be relieved by taking more of the medicine



Where can I find more information or help?

Talk to your GP, pharmacist or other health care professional if you are concerned about the medicines you take. Other services that can assist:

Pharmaceutical Helpline
Tel: 1800 737 233

SafeScript
www.health.vic.gov.au/safescript

Directline
Tel: 1800 888 236

