



# Victory Physicians Family Medicine

## Narcotic Information Sheet

This sheet is intended to provide a brief summary of some of the important properties of narcotics and some of the major risks and side effects of narcotic therapy.

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Initial
- 1) It must be understood that treating pain with narcotics comes with the risk of addiction.
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- 2) All narcotic medications are addictive. In general, the larger the dose and the longer duration the dose is taken, the greater the potential for addiction.
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- 3) Many patients who choose to stop treating their pain with narcotics or who have their disease surgically, medically or spontaneously cured, require detoxification and rehabilitation to cure their narcotic addiction.
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- 4) Narcotics cause both physiologic and psychologic dependence. The body and mind come to depend on the presence of the narcotics and can precipitate withdrawal symptoms in their absence.
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- 5) Narcotics cause tolerance. The higher the dose and the longer the duration of treatment the greater the tolerance. This means it requires a greater and greater dose to achieve the same effect. Since both the mind and body seek the same effect, what results is inadvertent escalation of the dose. This is exactly why only the doctor is permitted to adjust the dose and the dosing regimen.
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- 6) Narcotics have many side effects some of which can be life threatening. There are too many to list in their entirety here. All patients must read the medication inserts, ask their pharmacist or otherwise research the side effects of narcotics prior to taking these medications. Failure to do so might result in the patient not recognizing an ill effect which can be life threatening. Some of the many side effects include:
- a) Addiction
  - b) Dependence
  - c) Tolerance
  - d) Euphoria
  - e) Sedation
  - f) Respiratory depression
  - g) Faintness or fainting
  - h) Constipation
  - i) Ataxia
  - j) Impaired ability to concentrate and/or operate machinery and/or perform coordinated tasks
  - k) Excess sleep
  - l) Slurring of words
  - m) Nausea/vomiting

- n) Low blood pressure
- o) Potentiation by other substances like alcohol
- p) Pruritus
- q) Gastroparesis

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- 7) There are always other alternatives to treating pain with narcotics. Depending on the diagnosis, alternatives might include physical therapy, surgery, biofeedback, acupuncture, medical marijuana, chiropractic, decompression therapy, therapeutic ultrasound, non-narcotic medications, herbal therapies among others.
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- 8) It is essential that the patient follow the doctors dosing and dosage regimen and report any adverse reactions or side effects immediately to the doctor. Medication should be stopped until cleared to restart by the physician.
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- 9) Narcotic medications come in two basic types; those that are short acting immediate release rescue medicines and those that are extended/sustained release maintenance medicines. Examples of rescue medicines include Vicodin and Norco among others. Examples of maintenance medicines include Oxycontin CR, MS Contin Sustained Release, Methadone, and Fentanyl/Duragesic Patches. Patients are never allowed to take extended or sustained release narcotics on an as needed basis. Patients can never exceed the recommended maximum dosage of maintenance or rescue medications either.
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- 10) Narcotic medications can cover up, obscure or hide other serious medical problems. If a patient suspects there might be another problem going on, they must seek help immediately. This is why patients can never take pain medicines for any problem other than the one they have been prescribed for. Patients must maintain constant vigilance for any other problems that may be materializing.
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- 11) Any condition that interferes with the patient's ability to follow a doctor's instructions or increases the risk of addiction, might be a contraindication to narcotic therapy and must be disclosed to the physician prior to beginning therapy.
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- 12) Alcohol, muscle relaxants like Soma, sedative hypnotics like Ambien, benzodiazepines like Xanax and Valium, and recreational drugs can have a dangerous additive effect when taken with narcotics. Never drink alcohol or take other illicit drugs with narcotic pills and **stagger doses** of prescription muscle relaxants, sedative hypnotics and benzodiazepines to decrease the dangerous additive effects especially on respiratory depression.

My signature below indicates I have read, understand, agree with, and agree to comply with Frank Arian, M.D. A California Professional Corporation dba Victory Physicians' Narcotic Information Sheet and have received a copy for my future reference. I asked all questions I have and all of my questions were answered to my satisfaction and I wish to proceed with narcotic therapy.

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Patient's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date