

Will you or a loved one soon have wisdom teeth removal surgery?

Important questions to ask your dental professional about opioids before and after wisdom teeth removal and other dental surgeries.

Opioids are prescription medications sometimes used to manage pain after surgical procedures.

Common medications that contain opioids include Vicodin® (Hydrocodone/Acetaminophen) and Percocet® (Oxycodone/Acetaminophen).

1 Are there other options to help manage my pain?

Opioids are one of the options for severe pain. Other proven ways to help manage pain are over-the-counter pain relievers, including acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). Examples of NSAIDs include aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin® IB) and naproxen sodium (Aleve®). Prescription alternatives include long-acting anesthetics. There are also non-drug methods such as the use of ice or cold compresses and rest to minimize swelling, mouth cleansing, and a soft food diet (e.g., yogurt, bananas).

2 If prescribed an opioid, how can I avoid taking too much?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends taking the lowest effective dose of pain reliever for the shortest length of time possible. For the kind of pain you might experience after having your wisdom teeth removed, a 3-day supply of opioids or less is often all that is needed.[1] Ask your dentist for guidance, and use the attached Postoperative Pain Plan to express any concerns you may have.



Take the smallest effective dose, for the shortest amount of time needed.



Use the attached Postoperative Pain Plan and ask your dentist for guidance.

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3 Who is at risk for addiction?

Everyone is at risk. Young people are especially vulnerable, in part because of their developing brains.[2]

4 How can I take control of my care?

Develop a plan with your dental professional for managing your pain. Be sure to **speak up**, especially if you're worried about opioid or non-opioid medications. Let your dentist know if you're interested in non-drug pain relief options. And **set personal goals** that matter to you, such as getting back to work or school. Fill out the attached Postoperative Pain Plan to help guide your discussion.

5 What do I need to know about mixing different drugs?

Tell your dental professional or pharmacist about any medications you are taking, because any medicine can be harmful when mixed with opioids or other drugs, especially ones that treat anxiety, sleeping disorders and seizures. Other information to remember:

- Never mix alcohol with an opioid pain reliever.
- Hundreds of commonly used over-the-counter and prescription medicines contain the same active ingredients (acetaminophen or NSAIDs). If you take more than one medicine with the same kind of active ingredient at a time, it can increase your chance of harmful side effects. Always check every label and take **ONLY 1** medicine that contains the same kind of active ingredient at a time.



Use the attached Postoperative Pain Plan to help you:

Express concerns

Ask about multiple pain relief options

Set goals

To learn more about how to take over-the-counter pain relievers responsibly, visit GetReliefResponsibly.com.

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[1] CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain. www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/prescribing/guideline.html.

[2] HHS.gov. Opioids and Adolescents. https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-development/substance-use/drugs/opioids/index.html. Accessed September 27, 2019.

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Create your dental postoperative pain plan.

Experts highly recommend using a pain relief plan that combines more than one pain relief therapy, with the help of your dental professional. And if an opioid is needed, making and following a plan may help you take lower doses and stop sooner.

Take the first step.

Fill out this form with your dental professional before your procedure to tailor a postoperative plan that helps meet your individual needs.

Make personal goals.

Getting back to your regular activities is a top priority. Check the goals that matter to you.

- ☐ Go back to work/school
- ☐ Eat regular food
- ☐ Get out of bed
- ☐ Exercise/sports, such as: _____
- ☐ Hobbies, such as: _____
- ☐ Other: _____

Speak up.

To better support you, your dental professional needs to hear your thoughts.
Check the statements that reflect your feelings.

- ☐ I am worried about side effects of opioids (habit-forming, drowsiness, constipation, etc.).
- ☐ I am interested in non-opioid medicines for pain relief.
- ☐ I am interested in non-drug therapies to relieve pain.
- ☐ Other: _____

Ask about appropriate options for pain relief.

Over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription pain relievers may be recommended after a dental procedure.

Evidence shows that OTC pain relievers, such as acetaminophen or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), are effective and help reduce the need for opioids when used as part of a combination pain plan.

Check the ones you already use.

- ☐ Acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol®)
- ☐ Ibuprofen (e.g., Advil®, Motrin® IB)
- ☐ Naproxen sodium (e.g., Aleve®)
- ☐ Aspirin (e.g., Bayer® Extra Strength)

Prescription pain relievers.

- ☐ I am interested in prescription (non-opioid) medicines that relieve pain.
- ☐ I am interested in prescription (opioid) medicines that relieve pain.

Remember to tell your dental professional all medications and supplements you are taking.

- ☐ I currently take: _____

Ask about post-treatment instructions.

Check any below that you want to know more about.

- ☐ Cold compresses
- ☐ Rest/sleep with head slightly elevated
- ☐ Soft food diet
- ☐ Mouth cleansing and/or rinsing
- ☐ Antibiotics

See back ▶

Find dosage charts, quizzes and videos at **GetReliefResponsibly.com**

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Keep moving toward relief.

- Set and track your personal goals and your pain. **Work with your dental professional to make changes to your plan if needed**.
- Determine which OTC pain reliever and dose is right for you.
- Remember to follow directions and take medications as instructed by your dental professional.

Follow the dosing directions to help with pain relief.

OTC pain relievers dosage chart for adults and children 12 years and older

Acetaminophen	AMOUNT	DOSE & FREQUENCY	DAILY LIMIT
Acetaminophen regular strength (Tylenol® Regular Strength)	325 mg per pill	2 pills every 4 to 6 hours while symptoms last.	Do not take more than 10 pills in 24 hours, unless directed by a doctor.
Acetaminophen extra strength (Tylenol® Extra Strength)	500 mg per pill	2 pills every 6 hours while symptoms last.	Do not take more than 6 pills in 24 hours, unless directed by a doctor.
Acetaminophen extended release (Tylenol® 8 HR Arthritis Pain)	650 mg per pill	2 pills every 8 hours.	Do not take more than 6 pills in 24 hours.

Acetaminophen dosage **daily limit** is **4,000 mg**
For your safety, do not take more than this amount in 24 hours.

Some acetaminophen labels specify a 3,000 mg per day limit. Do not exceed the daily limit on the label. Consult your health care professional if you have questions.

NSAIDs nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs	AMOUNT	DOSE & FREQUENCY	DAILY LIMIT
Ibuprofen (Motrin® IB and Advil®)	200 mg per pill	1 pill every 4 to 6 hours while symptoms last (if pain or fever does not respond to 1 pill, 2 pills may be used).	Do not take more than 6 pills in 24 hours, unless directed by a doctor.

Ibuprofen dosage **daily limit** is **1,200 mg**
For your safety, do not take more than this amount in 24 hours

Naproxen sodium (Aleve®)	220 mg per pill	1 pill every 8 to 12 hours while symptoms last (for the first dose, you may take 2 pills within the first hour).	Do not take more than 2 pills in any 8 to 12 hour period. Do not take more than 3 pills in 24 hours.

Naproxen sodium dosage **daily limit** is **660 mg**
For your safety, do not take more than this amount in 24 hours

Aspirin regular strength (Bayer® Regular Strength)	325 mg per pill	1 or 2 pills every 4 hours, or 3 pills every 6 hours.	Do not take more than 12 pills in 24 hours.
Aspirin extra strength (Bayer® Extra Strength)	500 mg per pill	1 or 2 pills every 4 to 6 hours.	Do not take more than 8 pills in 24 hours.

Aspirin dosage **daily limit** is **4,000 mg**
For your safety, do not take more than this amount in 24 hours

It is important to **always read and follow the label.** If you have any questions, ask your health care professional which product may be right tor you.

Remember!

- Take **ONLY 1** medicine that contains the **same kind of active ingredient** (acetaminophen or NSAID) at a time.
- **Do not exceed the dose** on the label directions.
- For NSAIDs, take the **smallest effective dose** and take it for the **shortest amount of time** needed.

Why?

- If you take more than 1 medicine with the same kind of active ingredient at a time, it can increase your chance of harmful side effects.
- Taking more than directed does NOT equal faster relief. It can also lead to harmful side effects.

Find dosage charts, quizzes and videos at **GetReliefResponsibly.com**

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