

Gradually lowering your opioid use

Do not lower your dose without your health care provider's supervision.

Medication: _____

Current dose: _____



How will my health care provider lower the dose of my medication?

- Everyone is on a different dose of opioids.
- Lowering your dose of opioids requires a personalized plan.
- A common goal is to lower the dose of opioids by 10%-20% every 1-4 weeks or months.



If I lower the dose of my opioid, will my pain get worse?

- No. In fact, pain, function and quality of life often improve when opioids are stopped.
- This is because over time, opioids can become less effective, with increasing doses only increasing side-effects.
- When you need an opioid medication, take the lowest dose for as short a time as possible, and then gradually lower your dose until you stop. Once side-effects of opioids lessen, people often find they feel better.



Relieving chronic pain *without* opioids

There are a wide variety of ways to manage your chronic pain. Please ask your health care provider about any of these options:

- Self-management strategies
- Counseling
- Pain medication
- Non-opioid pain medicines
- Electrical nerve stimulation therapy
- Massage therapy
- Structured exercise programs
- Physical therapy
- Heating pad use
- Mindfulness-based stress reduction
- Yoga / Pilates / stretching
- Acupuncture
- Traditional healing practices

Talk to your health care provider to see what resources are available in your area

