



Southeastern Neurosurgical & Spine Institute

10 Guidelines for Narcotic Drugs

1. Our practice may use narcotic drugs to treat new pain or pain after surgery. We do not treat chronic (ongoing) pain, so we rarely prescribe these drugs for more than 3 months.
2. The strength of the drug will be lowered over time as your pain lessens. In the end, the drug will no longer be prescribed.
3. Take the drug only as ordered. You should never take more than the amount ordered.
4. We do not prescribe new narcotic drugs over the phone. Also, we will not increase the strength of a prescription over the phone. A request to start on narcotics or to increase your dose must be discussed in person, preferably during an office visit.
5. Narcotics can be ordered by ONE prescriber only and filled at ONE pharmacy only. You must let your other prescribers know that you are receiving narcotics from a healthcare provider. If you get narcotics from another provider, no more prescriptions will be written.
6. Using alcohol or any illegal drug (narcotics, marijuana, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogenics or mood-altering drugs) may greatly increase the risk of serious—and possibly deadly—side effects of narcotics.
7. You must keep the drug in a safe place. Young people, in particular, sometimes will abuse narcotics on purpose. It is against the law to give or sell these drugs to others. If narcotics are damaged, lost or stolen, they will not be replaced. If the prescriber has any concern that you are misusing these drugs, the proper authorities—including law enforcement—will be warned.

8. Here are some risks linked with the use of narcotic drugs:

- Nausea/vomiting
- Constipation
- Little urine
- Poor memory and concentration
- Depression or other mood changes
- Feeling tired
- Problems breathing
- Allergic reaction causing rash, hives or problems breathing
- Addiction/drug dependence
- Death

Because these drugs may affect your ability to drive or operate machinery, you should be very careful around vehicles. Also, you should not sign important legal papers while on narcotics.

9. Please tell your prescriber at once if you have any of the side effects listed above.
10. Make calls for narcotics **during normal office hours only. Please do not ask for these drugs after hours, weekends or holidays.** Narcotic prescriptions are never refilled early.

If you have questions about this information, please call our office at (864) 797-7150.

These guidelines meet state and federal recommendations on the use of narcotic pain drugs.