

Going home with a narcotic prescription for your child

Your child may go home with a prescription for a narcotic/opioid. Commonly prescribed narcotics/opioids include codeine, hydrocodone (Trade names: Norco or Hycet), or oxycodone. There are things you should know about using, storing and disposing of this medication.

How should I use this medication?

Narcotics (opioids) are intended to improve your child's pain enough so that they are able to do their day-to-day activities, but not reduce their pain to zero.

Many people use opioids without problems. It is important to read and follow the directions on the prescription label. They are strong medications, which can be habit-forming and should be used with caution. Use the lowest dose possible for the shortest duration of time. Do not have your child take it more often than directed.

Your child may feel sleepy or dizzy while taking this medication. Their ability to drive or operate machinery may be impaired. Avoid giving your child other sedating medications, like benzodiazepines, while taking this medication. Discuss this with your child's doctor if you are unsure or have any questions.

You will need to call 911 if:

- Your child can't speak clearly when they awaken
- You can't wake your child up
- Your child's lips or fingernails are blue or purple
- Your child is making unusual heaving snoring, gasping, gurgling or snorting sounds while sleeping
- Your child is not breathing or has no heartbeat

Where should I keep my medicine?

Keep medications in a secure and safe place to protect from theft. Keep out of the reach of children. This medicine can be abused. Do not share this medicine with anyone. Selling or giving away this medicine is dangerous and against the law.

How should I get rid of leftover medication?

Once your child no longer needs this medication, it should be disposed of promptly.

Recommendations:

1. Use a medicine take-back program (often available at commercial pharmacies or local law enforcement agencies).

2. Disposal in the household trash:

- a. Mix medicines in a sealable bag with an undesirable substance such as dirt, cat litter, or used coffee grounds.
- b. Seal the plastic bag containing the mixture and throw it in your household trash.
- c. Delete all personal information on the prescription label with a black marker, then dispose of the container.

For more information on safe storage and drug disposal, please visit:

- Where and how to dispose of unused medicines (<https://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm101653.htm>)
- How to safely store and dispose of your medications (<http://www.safemedication.com/safemed/PharmacistsJournal/How-to-Safely-Store-and-Dispose-of-Your-Medications>)