



Spine Institute of Arizona

CAUTIONS REGARDING THE USE OF LONG TERM NARCOTICS

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1. Narcotics are drugs that act like morphine. These include drugs: Lortab, Percocet, Demerol, Darcon, Ultram, Tylenol #3, and others.
2. The drug you have been prescribed is extremely dangerous, capable of being abused, and an over-dose can be lethal
3. When taken in excess, the individual will first become sleepy, fall asleep, will be difficult or unable to arouse and finally, will stop breathing. The level of sedation depends upon the amount of drug ingested.
4. Keep these drugs in a locked box.
5. Be responsible for the drug. No early refill will be given.
6. These drugs can cause physical dependence. This means when you stop taking the drug you will experience a withdrawal reaction. Physical dependence occurs after approximately one week on the drug. This does not mean the drug cannot be stopped, however, it usually must be tapered in order to avoid withdrawal symptoms. A withdrawal reaction can be characterized by severe nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, muscle aches, low-grade fever, tremor, rapid heart rate, sweating, and chills.
7. Physical dependence is not the same as addiction. Physical dependence means that if you stop the drug suddenly, you will develop a withdrawal reaction (nausea, diarrhea, sweats, shaky, and flu-like symptoms). Addiction is a psychological diagnosis characterized by cravings for the drug, uncontrollable use of the drug even when it causes harm to you and others.
8. There are numerous side effects, which can occur as a consequence of the use of these medications. These include:
 - A. Sedation. If you experience this side effect, even slightly, you should not be driving an automobile until the effect wears off. It generally takes one to two weeks for this side effect to wear off. You should then be safe to operate an automobile. If confusion, mental changes or excessive sleepiness occur, report this to your physician or present to the nearest emergency room immediately.
 - B. Constipation. If this occurs you will not adapt to this effect. You should drink eight 8 ounce glasses of water per day, take daily doses of Senokot S or Dulcolax, use milk of Magnesia no more than every third day for no bowel movement and notify your physician that you are experiencing this complication. People over the age of 60 are especially at risk for this complication.
 - C. Urinary retention. This means it is difficult to start your stream. Males over the age of 60 are especially at risk for this complication.
 - D. Itching. These drugs can cause itching in some patients.
 - E. Sweating. Profuse sweating can occur at any time with the use of these medications.
 - F. Nausea and vomiting. If this occurs, notify your physician.
 - G. Decreased sex drive.
 - H. Mild suppression of the immune response.

I understand these cautions and am willing to take the drugs as prescribed by my doctor.

_____ Patient

_____ Date

_____ Witness

_____ Date