



## SAFETY INFORMATION FOR PAIN MANAGEMENT

VA IS COMMITTED TO TREATING PAIN IN A WAY THAT ENSURES VETERAN SATISFACTION, YOUR SAFETY AND THE SAFETY OF OTHER PEOPLE.

### YOUR SAFETY IS OUR TOP PRIORITY:

- Our goal is to prevent overdose, side effects or death from your pain medicines.
- There are many ways to treat chronic pain. Your health care team can help.
- Many Veterans have more success by taking a whole person approach.
- The main goal is to help you manage your pain safely.
- Changes in the treatment of pain are being made at all VA medical centers.

### TYPES OF OPIOID MEDICINES:

You may expect changes in your pain program if you take any of these opioid medicines:

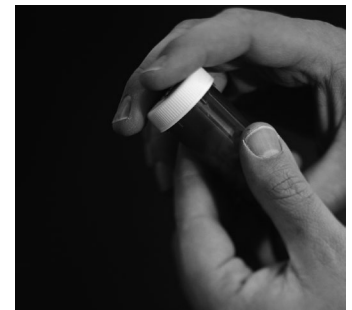
- Lortab/Norco
- Morphine
- Fentanyl
- Percocet
- Oxycodone
- Methadone

### CHANGES THAT MAY OCCUR:

Your health care team will talk to you about your current treatment plan. Some changes may be made to manage your chronic pain in a safer and more effective way.

You may be offered other pain treatments. These might include:

- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Heat and cold therapy
- Chiropractic
- Self-care techniques
- Exercise
- Weight loss
- Massage
- Tai Chi
- Acupuncture
- Nerve stimulation
- Relaxation training
- Mental health treatment
- Stretching
- Counseling and coaching
- Rehabilitation
- Non-opioid pain medications
- Injections
- Specialist pain care
- Surgery
- Pain classes
- Support groups
- Yoga



## VA WANTS TO HELP YOU STAY SAFE WHEN USING OPIOIDS.

### VA WILL:

- Check your pain diagnosis.
- Try non-opioid treatment for pain first. Physical therapy, other types of pain medicine or other options will be offered.
- Work with you to make a pain plan which includes risks and benefits.
- Have you sign an Opioid Agreement Contract.
- Obtain regular urine tests.
- Provide a short-term trial of medicine.
- Limit the number of pills (when needed)
- Help you make an Exit Plan (what you can do when the treatment plan is not working).
- Review your medicine risks and benefits.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- Learn more about managing your pain. Know and review the things VA is doing for opioid safety.
- If you have chronic pain and use opioids, talk to your provider about the risks and benefits of your current pain therapy. Help your provider deliver safe and effective care.
- Know your medicine or dose may change if your provider finds the opioid you are taking has a high safety risk for you.
- Be open and try other treatment options, (other than opioids) that will help manage your pain.
- Visit the Veterans Health Library online at: <http://www.veteranshealthlibrary.org/diseasesconditions/ChronicPain/>



Your provider will work with you to find the best possible ways to manage your pain.

