

REMEMBER!

- Within the first few days after surgery: regularly take your acetaminophen and anti-inflammatory. Do not let pain last because you are afraid to take medication “for nothing”. Once pain is evident, it will be more difficult to relieve.
- If the pain is not relieved after taking acetaminophen and an anti-inflammatory, take a narcotic prescribed by your surgeon, starting with the lowest dosage possible and rest.
- **ATTENTION!** Some narcotics already contain acetaminophen. Speak to your pharmacist to find out how many acetaminophen you can take when taking a narcotic to avoid exceeding the maximum recommended dosage.
- After several days, when you feel better, reduce or stop taking the narcotic and try taking acetaminophen and an anti-inflammatory as needed.
- Do not hesitate to seek advice from your pharmacist or ask questions.



HOW TO MANAGE PAIN FOLLOWING SURGERY

MANAGING YOUR PAIN RELIEVER MUST BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

Poor management of your pain relief could cause more discomfort and undesirable side effects. It is important to understand your treatment well so that you are relieved adequately.

Pain could be more intense two days following your surgery and usually diminishes in the following days.

If your pain is relieved from the start, it will last for a shorter period and you will feel better more quickly.

Do not let pain last for fear of taking a pain reliever “for nothing”. Once pain is present, it will be more difficult to relieve.

MEDICATION THAT RELIEVES PAIN

Acetaminophen

Different formulations are available from your pharmacy without a prescription.

Regular release tablet

Trade name: Tylenol Extra Strength

- 500 mg tablet
- You can take 2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours
- Do not exceed 8 tablets per day

Long acting tablet

(approximately 8 hours)

Trade name: Tylenol L.A., Tylenol Arthritic, etc.

- 650 mg tablet
- You can take 2 tablets every 8 hours
- Do not exceed 6 tablets per day



MEDICATION THAT RELIEVES PAIN

Anti-inflammatory

Ibuprofen: Advil and Motrin
Celecoxib: Celebrex
Naproxen: Naprosyn, etc.

These medications diminish inflammation and pain caused by the surgery.

Ibuprofen (Advil and Motrin) are available without a prescription.

Speak to your pharmacist before taking this medication. They will inform you if there are any interactions with the other medication that you take and will advise you of the best way to take it.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and anti-inflammatories **can be taken together**. This combination produces little side effects and is more effective if taken regularly for several days. Start your treatment by taking them regularly.

Narcotics

Hydromorphone: Dilaudid
Morphine: Statex
Codeine: Meperidine (Demerol)
Oxycodone: Supeudol
Tramadol: Ultram, Zytram, Ralivia, Durela, Tridural
Tramadol + Acetaminophen : Tramacet
Codeine + Acetaminophen : Empracet

If you are not relieved after regularly taking acetaminophen and an anti-inflammatory, you can take one of these medications as prescribed by your surgeon. Like all medication, it is important to take them according to the dosage indicated on your pill container.

These medications are useful for relieving pain when acetaminophen and anti-inflammatories are insufficient.



CAUTION

Some of these medications already contain acetaminophen. Speak to your pharmacist to know how many acetaminophen you can take when taking a narcotic in order to not exceed the maximum recommended dosage.

These medications produce more serious side effects than acetaminophen and anti-inflammatories; such side effects may include nausea, vomiting, dizziness, drowsiness, etc.

These negative effects appear mostly at the beginning of the treatment or when the number of tablets ingested is too high in relation to the pain that needs to be relieved.



This is why it is important to:

- Respect the dosage indicated on the pill container
- Start with the lowest dosage. For example: if your surgeon prescribes one or two tablets, start with one tablet and complete with the second tablet one hour later if you are still experiencing pain. By doing this, you will know the smallest dosage that will relieve your pain and reduce the risk of suffering from negative side effects.
- Limit your activities when taking any of these medications (Rest!)

After a few days, the pain will diminish and you can stop or reduce medication by either reducing the quantity of tablets taken (take 1 instead of 2) or by reducing the frequency in which you take them.

