

# Medicines for short-term (acute) pain

## *Strong pain medicines (opioids)*

*eg, codeine, tramadol, oxycodone, buprenorphine*

My medicine is called: \_\_\_\_\_

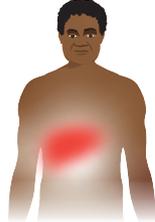
### Strong pain medicines (opioids):

- ▶ can be used for strong pain for a short time, like after an operation or a major injury
- ▶ are used for cancer pain
- ▶ are not helpful for pain that lasts more than 3 months. They can cause harm and even make the pain worse over time.

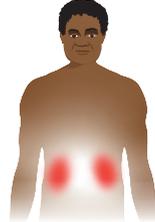
### If you:



are pregnant



have liver trouble



have kidney trouble



have breathing trouble



have fits



have had trouble with other strong pain medicines

ask your doctor if a strong pain medicine is right for you.

### Other ways to deal with pain:



Start moving, keep moving



Get good sleep



Eat healthy tucker



Look after your mind and spirit



Get support

### Some medicines do not go well with strong pain medicines

Always check. Tell your Aboriginal Health Worker, nurse, doctor and pharmacist about **all the medicines** you are taking.

This includes medicines:

- ▶ you bought yourself at the supermarket or store
- ▶ gathered from the bush, or given to you by a traditional healer
- ▶ medicines given to you by a family member or friend.



## Side effects of strong pain medicines

Strong pain medicines can cause unwanted effects (side effects). Side effects do not happen to everyone and they may go away after a short time. Talk to your Aboriginal Health Worker, nurse, doctor or pharmacist about any problems you're having.



Feeling sleepy



Feeling or being sick



Feeling dizzy



Constipation

### Serious side effects:

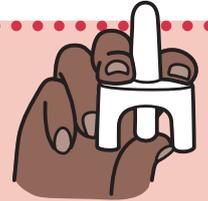


- ▶ hard to wake up
- ▶ having trouble staying awake
- ▶ shallow breathing



Call 000 for an 'ambulance' straight away.

Naloxone is a medicine that reverses serious side effects until you can get help. Talk to the doctor, pharmacist or health worker about having some naloxone on hand for emergencies.



## Things to know



Do not mix with alcohol, it makes side effects worse.



Strong pain medicines can make you sleepy. It may not be safe for you to drive.



When you stop using your medicine, don't put it in the bin. Take it back to the clinic or doctor.



Keep medicines in a safe place, out of reach of children.



If on strong pain medicines for a long time, talk to your doctor about a plan to reduce. Don't just stop.

- ✓ Take the medicine as the doctor has told you
- ✗ Please don't share the medicine, it could be harmful to others

## Extra information for me

### My next appointment:

nps.org.au

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