



Rx Pain Medications

KNOW THE OPTIONS • GET THE FACTS

What to Do if Your Medication Isn't Working

If you're in pain and your medication isn't working well enough, it can be tempting to stop or increase the dosage. However, trying to manage pain on your own without talking to your health care provider can have serious consequences, including unpleasant or dangerous side effects—or even death.

If your pain medication isn't working, call your health care provider.

Remember:

- Don't change the dosage without talking to your health care provider.
- Don't abruptly stop taking your medication.
- Take medicines only as directed.

When you talk to your health care provider:

- Tell them about all the medicines you take, including prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, and any vitamins, supplements, or herbal medications.
- Describe what has happened since your last visit.
- Verify that you were prescribed the right medication.
- Ask what the medication is supposed to do and when it will start working.
- Write down any information the health care provider gives you about making a change in your treatment.
- Ask questions if the health care provider's instructions are unclear.
- Ask about nonpharmacologic treatment options.

A good patient-provider relationship is a partnership. You and your health care providers can work as a team to address your problems with pain and keep you healthy. And, as always, do not share with others—prescription medications should always be monitored by a licensed prescriber or health care provider.

Additional Resources

For more information on pain management, visit: www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/pain-management or <http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/prescribing/patients.html>.

Sources Consulted

- National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2014). Preventing and recognizing prescription drug abuse. Retrieved from <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/prescription-drugs-abuse-addiction/preventing-recognizing-prescription-drug-abuse>

