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Pain Relief Medications after Procedures

Please read the entire document before taking your medications

In most cases, a local anesthetic is used during your procedure to minimize discomfort. The anesthetic will wear off after 1 to 6 hours so it is best to take a pain relieving medication BEFORE the anesthetic effects are gone. Please follow these instructions for optimal pain control.

NON-NARCOTIC MEDICATIONS

For most minor procedures such as scar revisions, skin excisions, eyelid lifts, and small area liposuction, over the counter (non-prescription) medications are enough to control discomfort and relieve pain. The following recommendations are for adults over 100 pounds. For younger patients, or those weighing less than 100 pounds, check the product label instructions. In all cases, the generic medications can be used instead of the brand-name medications.

- **Acetaminophen** (Tylenol) 325 mg: Take 1-2 pills every 4 hours as needed for pain
- **Ibuprofen** (Motrin, Advil) 200 mg: Take 1-3 pills every 4 hours as needed for pain
- **Naproxen** (Aleve) 220 mg: Take 1 pill every 8 hours as needed for pain

Medication Combinations

Acetaminophen can be combined with **Ibuprofen** or **Naproxen** (but not both) to provide better pain relief. Use the following medication schedule:

- **Acetaminophen** (as above) every 4 hours + **Ibuprofen** (as above) every 4 hours, or
- **Acetaminophen** (as above) every 4 hours + **Naproxen** (as above) every 8 hours

To prevent "high and low" medication effects, you may alternate **Acetaminophen** and **Ibuprofen** every 2 hours. For example, you may take **Acetaminophen** at noon, then **Ibuprofen** at 2 pm, then **Acetaminophen** again at 4 pm followed by **Ibuprofen** at 6 pm. If using **Naproxen**, take **Acetaminophen** 2 to 3 hours before or after **Naproxen**.

PRESCRIPTION NARCOTIC MEDICATIONS

For procedures such as larger liposuction, tummy tucks, and breast procedures, stronger pain relieving medications with narcotics are used. They typically also contain **Acetaminophen** so do NOT take additional **Acetaminophen** if the total amount would exceed the maximum dose of 4000 mg of **Acetaminophen** per day. Most patients feel that **Oxycodone** provides more pain relief than **Hydrocodone**.

- **Hydrocodone 5 mg + Acetaminophen 325 mg** (Vicodin, Lortab, Norco): Take 1-2 pills every 4 hours as needed for pain
- **Oxycodone 5 mg + Acetaminophen 325 mg** (Percocet, Roxicet, Endocet): Take 1-2 pills every 4 hours as needed for pain

PRESCRIPTION NON-NARCOTIC MEDICATIONS

In some cases, **gabapentin** (Neurontin) may be prescribed. **Gabapentin** should be taken before going to sleep the night BEFORE your procedure and continued for 3 to 6 days.

- **Gabapentin 300 mg** take 2 pills at night BEFORE your procedure, then take 2 pills every 8 hours starting AFTER your procedure for up to 1 week.

If you experience sedation, dizziness, or confusion, stop the **gabapentin** and notify your surgeon.

Medication Combinations

Ibuprofen or **Naproxen** may be taken in combination with the prescribed **narcotic** medications and **gabapentin**. To prevent "high and low" medication effects, you may alternate the **narcotic** medication and **Ibuprofen** every 2 hours. For example, you may take the **narcotic** medication at noon, then **Ibuprofen** at 2 pm, then the **narcotic** medication again at 4 pm followed by **Ibuprofen** at 6 pm. If using **Naproxen**, take the **narcotic** medication 2 to 3 hours before or after **Naproxen**.

MEDICATIONS FOR NAUSEA & VOMITING

You may receive a prescription for **ondansetron 4mg** (Zofran ODT) to treat nausea or vomiting after your procedure. This is a dissolving pill which should be placed on the top of your tongue and NOT swallowed.

MEDICATIONS FOR SLEEP

If you are having difficulty sleeping, consider over-the-counter **diphenhydramine (Benadryl)** for a short period of time. It may make you drowsy during the day so only use when you plan on sleeping, not when planning on driving or doing other activities.

PRECAUTIONS & WARNINGS

While taking **narcotic** medications, **gabapentin**, or **diphenhydramine**, do NOT drive a vehicle, operate any heavy machinery, or participate in any activity where sedation, dizziness, or lightheadedness can put you or someone else at risk, or your ability to make important decisions is required.

Do NOT take more than 4000 mg (12 pills) of **Acetaminophen** per day. If taking other medications, check to see if they contain **Acetaminophen** and do not exceed 4000mg per day.

Do NOT take more than 3600 mg (18 pills) of **Ibuprofen** per day

Do NOT take more than 660 mg (3 pills) of **Naproxen** per day

Do NOT take **Ibuprofen** and **Naproxen** at the same time, use one or the other at least 6 hours apart

Do NOT take **Ibuprofen** and **Naproxen** for more than 7 days in a row

Do NOT take **Ibuprofen** or **Naproxen** if you have the following:

- A history of heart attack, stroke, or blood clot
- Heart disease, congestive heart failure, high blood pressure
- A history of stomach ulcers or bleeding
- Active asthma
- Liver or kidney disease

Do NOT take **Hydrocodone** and **Oxycodone** at the same time, use one or the other at least 4 hours apart.

Do NOT take **Aspirin** unless instructed to do so. If you have a heart stent, discuss with us before your procedure.

Due to government regulations, prescriptions for narcotic medications cannot be called in or faxed to your pharmacy. Instead, the prescription must be on an official printed prescription pad. Therefore, narcotic prescriptions cannot be "called-in" after regular office hours or on weekends.

Read all the labels, instructions, precautions and warnings on your non-prescription and prescription medications. You are responsible for making sure that you can take these medications based on any other of your medical conditions or any other medications which you are taking.