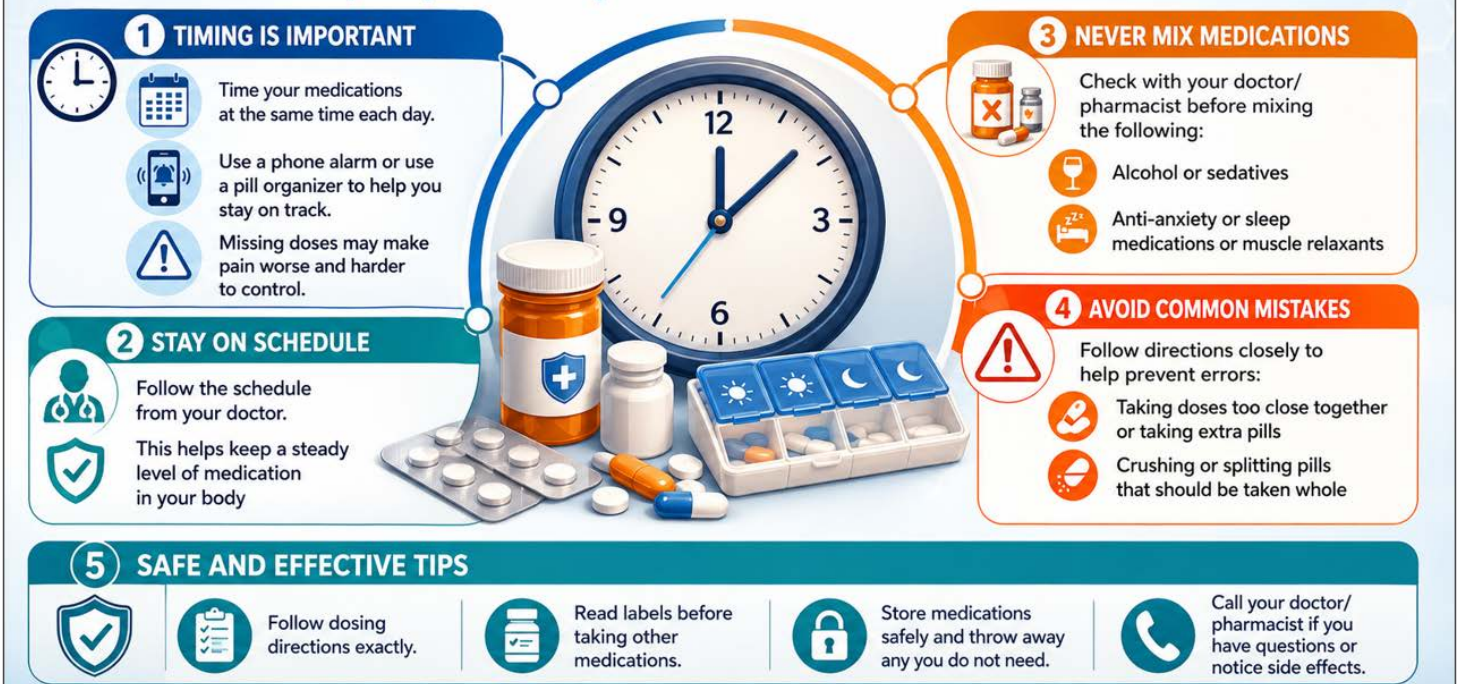


USING PAIN MEDICATIONS SAFELY AND EFFECTIVELY

Simple tips to make pain medications safer and work better



1 TIMING IS IMPORTANT

- Time your medications at the same time each day.
- Use a phone alarm or use a pill organizer to help you stay on track.
- Missing doses may make pain worse and harder to control.

2 STAY ON SCHEDULE

- Follow the schedule from your doctor.
- This helps keep a steady level of medication in your body.

3 NEVER MIX MEDICATIONS

Check with your doctor/ pharmacist before mixing the following:

- Alcohol or sedatives
- Anti-anxiety or sleep medications or muscle relaxants

4 AVOID COMMON MISTAKES

Follow directions closely to help prevent errors:

- Taking doses too close together or taking extra pills
- Crushing or splitting pills that should be taken whole

5 SAFE AND EFFECTIVE TIPS

- Follow dosing directions exactly.
- Read labels before taking other medications.
- Store medications safely and throw away any you do not need.
- Call your doctor/ pharmacist if you have questions or notice side effects.

What This Means for You

Pain medications may help after surgery; however, they work best if you use them the right way rather than just more often. Good pain control helps you rest, move, and recover. It also helps lower the risk of side effects.

Timing is Important

Pain medications work better when taken on time, as your doctor instructed. Waiting too long may let pain build up and may make pain harder to control. You can stay on schedule by using a phone alarm, a written schedule, or a pill box.

Mixing Medications May Be Dangerous

Some medications should not be taken together unless your doctor or pharmacist says it is safe. Be careful with medications that may make you sleepy or slow your breathing. Avoid mixing pain medications with alcohol, sleep medications, anti-anxiety medications, and muscle relaxants.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Medication problems often happen when patients:

- Take doses too close together
- Take extra pills
- Split or crush pills that should be swallowed whole
- Take another medication without checking the label

Taking more medication does not always help pain. It may increase the risk of side effects.

Using Pain Medications Safely

To stay safe:

- Follow the exact dose and timing.
- Read labels before taking any other medications
- Store medications in a safe place.
- Dispose of unused medications safely.

When to Ask for Help

Call your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure how to take your medication, think two medications may not be safe together, or have side effects. Asking questions early may help prevent serious problems.

Educational Content Disclosure

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