

**Like everything we do in medicine there are risks and benefits. The goal is to make sure that the benefits outweigh the risks and certainly this has been the case in you. You have lived with the pain and have not become your pain. You have been enabled to keep living your life despite the pain issues.**

**The uses of non-opioid adjuvant medications that have opioid sparing characteristics are best and have been used in you with and without the desired effect and/or side effects. You had insufficient pain relief and therefore the opioids were added.**

### **GENERAL RULES:**

**Please remember** that we are providing you with a potent pain reliever that may have significant side effects, including unintentional death, if not used appropriately. Therefore, you must be 100 % compliant and follow our instructions appropriately.

**-Absolute compliance** is of utmost importance with your pain medications.

**-You must contact us** if any issues/changes need to be made.

**-You must come for requested follow up appointments. Keep your pain management follow appointments as scheduled.** It is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to make your follow up appointments as requested.

**-You must bring all your pain medications to every visit for pill counts.**

**-Random urine drug testing is mandatory**

**-All abnormal urine drug tests require confirmatory testing** which can take 2-4 days to get results

**-You should schedule your follow up appointments at least one week before you should run out of your medications.**

**-If a urine drug test comes back abnormal you should have one week of medications left which you will take while we wait**

**for confirmatory testing results to return. If the confirmatory testing confirms an inappropriate drug/medication was taken we will no longer write prescriptions for your opioid medications.** *We will still address and treat your chronic pain but will only use non-opioid medications, non-pharmacological treatments, etc. We will still see you for all your other primary care needs.*

-If confirmatory testing shows that the urine drug test was a false positive you can pick up your regular prescription.

-If you **refuse to give a urine sample for random drug screening** then you will not be prescribed any additional opioid medication until you provide us with a urine sample.

**-No refills will be given after hours, or weekends.** It is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to protect your medications and handle them with the appropriate care.

**-Never stop the opioid pain medication suddenly** since it can lead to severe withdrawal symptoms and associated very serious conditions.

**-Never share** your pain medication with anyone.

**-Never break or manipulate the long acting opioid pain medications.**

**-Never drink alcohol or mix your pain medication with other drugs,** unless cleared by your doctor.

-Please remind yourself and read at times the pain agreement and consent that we discussed in detail and that you signed.

-If you are hospitalized or seen by a doctor in an **emergent situation** (for example if you are injured in an accident) then please let us know if you were prescribed extra opioid or benzodiazepine medications. **In general we understand if you were prescribed medications by another provider in emergent situations.** We may ask for the medical records from the facility

that treated you.

-Going to the emergency department periodically/regularly specifically to obtain a prescription for extra pain medications does not count as an emergent situation and will be treated as non-compliant behavior (see above)

**-Non-compliance is not acceptable.**

-As your healthcare provider we reserve the right to stop prescribing opioid and medications if we feel the medication is not being used as prescribed, abused, sold, shared, if you are doing illegal drugs, if you are taking opioids/benzodiazepines/"narcotics" prescribed by another provider (unless we discussed this up front and agreed on a treatment plan) or bought off the street, doctor shopping, smoking **marijuana** (even if it is for medical marijuana unless your use of this is explicitly discussed with us and we agree on what is acceptable), not coming to appointments regularly, abusive/threatening behavior to any of our staff, failing random drug testing or if the medication poses more risks than benefits.

- **The risk of respiratory depression and death are higher when opioids are taken with benzodiazepines** (Xanax, Ativan, Valium, etc.) For most situations we will not prescribe you any benzodiazepine medication if you are already taking prescription opioid medication.

-If you are already prescribed to both an opioid medication and a benzodiazepine then our goal will be to wean you off of one of those medications.

-If you have been taking benzodiazepine medication every day for over two weeks you should not suddenly stop taking it. Sudden discontinuation of a benzodiazepine (in chronic users) can have serious consequences **including death**.

-Remember **your active involvement in your care** is of utmost importance and will help you to enjoy and love your life, despite the pain. **Being active in your care will keep you from "becoming your pain"**.

