



Opioids (Common Side Effects)



Overview

Opioids are a powerful class of drugs. They can control severe pain. But many people who use opioids experience some side effects. You should be aware of these side effects so you can use these drugs safely.

Drowsiness and Impaired Judgment

Opioids can make you feel drowsy. They can also affect your ability to make decisions. For these reasons, it's not safe to drive or to operate heavy machinery while under the influence of these drugs. And it's not safe to mix these drugs with alcohol.

Nausea

For some people, opioids can trigger nausea and vomiting. Taking these drugs with food can help. Be sure to follow the instructions about when and how to take your medicine.



Constipation

Constipation is a problem for many people who use opioids. It's important to drink plenty of fluids when taking these medications. Getting more exercise can help, too. And you may benefit from extra fiber in your diet, or from a stool softener.

Itchiness

Opioids can also make your skin feel itchy. We don't fully understand why this happens, but it can be very uncomfortable for some people. If you scratch and injure your skin, you can get an infection. If itchiness is a problem for you, your doctor can help you find ways to control it.

Conclusion

Opioids can be an important part of your care. If you have any side effects, be sure to discuss them with your doctor.

