

POST-OP PAIN EXPLAINED (PAGE 1 OF 2)

After surgery, there is a degree of pain and swelling to anticipate. For most patients, we recommend ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), acetaminophen (Tylenol) or a combination of both. Opioid pain medication, such as hydrocodone (Norco, Vicodin), is usually not necessary for most outpatient procedures. This allows for fewer prescription drugs that have undesirable side-effects. In addition to opioid avoidance, we follow studied recommendations that **more frequent dosing**, rather than stronger/delayed dosing, is the key to success for pain reduction.



IV Pain & Sedative Medications

THESE MEDICATIONS MAY BE GIVEN DURING AN IV SEDATION PROCEDURE:

KETORLAC (TORDOL)

This medication may be given via IV during your procedure to aid in the prevention of post-operative pain and swelling. A single dose is given and it is advisable for most patients to begin taking ibuprofen 6 hours after their appointment. Tylenol may be taken immediately after the procedure and when it is safe to swallow water.

DEXAMETHASONE (DECADRON)

This IV medication is a steroid aimed at reducing post-procedure pain and swelling, with an emphasis on swelling. It is given along with other medications during an IV sedation procedure. Sadly however, your muscles won't grow with this one!



Commonly Recommended Home Pain Medications

IBU IBUPROFEN (MOTRIN, ADVIL)

Part of the 'NSAID' family, this medication is available in prescription and OTC strength. Our office normally prescribes this medication in Rx strength, 600mg tablets. This allows for dosing schedules that is the same as acetaminophen. Discuss with the doctor if you are taking similar medications, such as Mobic (meloxicam), Aleve (naproxen, naprosyn), aspirin or blood thinners. These may interact with ibuprofen.

The recommended dose is 600mg: 3 OTC-pills (200mg per pill) or 1 Rx-Pill (600 mg per pill) every 6 hours

ACE ACETAMINOPHEN (TYLENOL, APAP)

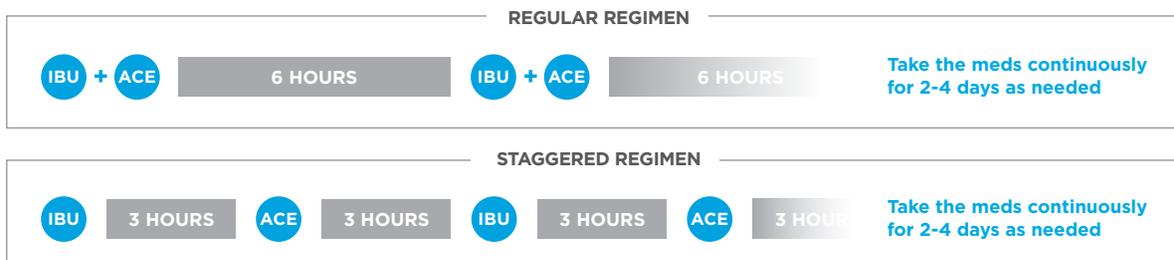
A different type of pain medication and fever reducer than ibuprofen, this medication may be added to increase pain relief effects. It is recommended to at least take ibuprofen and add acetaminophen if pain is more bothersome. Some patients may not be able to, or have been advised not to, take ibuprofen. Therefore, acetaminophen may be the only OTC choice available.

The recommended dose is 650mg: 2 regular-strength pills every 6 hours

The Rx dose is 1000mg: 2 extra-strength pills every 6 hours (max 3 days at a time)

RECOMMENDED PAIN RELIEF REGIMEN

For most patients, ibuprofen may be all that is needed. If additional pain relief is desired, ibuprofen & acetaminophen are often OK to take in combination — they work in different ways and are safe when taken for a few days at a time. You may take both medications together every 6 hours or stagger the doses every 3 hours. However, certain health conditions may interfere.





Swelling & Bruising

After surgery, swelling typically peaks at 1 to 3 days. The severity and extent of swelling can depend on many things — especially your health conditions, the extent of the surgery, and any medications that may be involved. After the 4th day, you should see an improvement in swelling. In most cases, this fully resolves by the 7th day after the procedure.

Swelling frequently involves aspects of the mouth, gums, cheek, eye and face. There may be some bruising present (black/blue/green/yellow). However, it takes a few days for this to become apparent and even longer for it to go away. Rarely does swelling involve areas that were not involved with the surgical procedure. Warm, moist heat with frequent application gets these possible bruises to resolve just a little faster.

On the 4th day, if your swelling hasn't begun to subside, or has shown evidence of increasing in size or severity, you should contact our office to schedule a follow-up appointment.

ICE/COLD THERAPY

Apply ice or a cold gel pack to the face or surgical area during the first 24-hour period. This will help prevent the swelling as best as possible. After 24 hours, the benefits of ice are reduced.

HEAT THERAPY

After 48 hours, most patients find that heat therapy works best to relief pain associated with swelling. A warm damp towel or warm gel pack may be the best way to apply heat. Electric heating pads may be used, but avoid the HIGH setting and certainly do not sleep with any form of heat.



Other Prescription Medications

TRAMADOL (ULTRAM)

This is an opioid pain medication that may be an option for pain management. It may be used in conjunction with other pain medications or individually. However, this medication comes with increased risk of addiction and other negative health effects. Use of this medication would require a conversation with our surgical team.

TYLENOL #3 (ACETAMINOPHEN WITH CODEINE)

This combination medication contains codeine, which is an opioid class of pain medication. Commonly prescribed in the past, recent research has indicated that some patients may not reliably metabolize this drug which may lead to adverse effects. Therefore, this medication isn't recommended, in most cases, any longer.

NORCO/VICODIN (HYDROCODONE) & OXYCONTIN/PERCOCET (OXYCODONE)

These modern combination drugs contain a more potent form of opioid-class pain medication. These prescription pain medications are effective in pain relief, but have more serious side effects and abuse/dependency concerns than ibuprofen and Tylenol alone. These prescriptions are highly reserved for select patients and appropriate situations as there is a significant potential for abuse and dependency.