

Boston Spine Surgery Prescription Medication Policy

Boston Spine Surgery will prescribe pain medication to post-operative patients for a limited time. Medications are not refilled after hours, on the weekends or on holidays. When you call our office for a refill, please have the following information available:

- Patient name
- Patient telephone number
- Medication
- Name, phone number and address of the pharmacy where the medication is to be filled.

For more specific information about our narcotic prescription policy, please read on.

SURGERY MEDICATION GUIDELINES

You are scheduled to have surgery with us, which unfortunately, will cause some pain. Your orthopaedic surgeon, fellow, resident, nurse practitioner or physician assistant, will prescribe medication to relieve your symptoms. Sometimes the combination of anesthesia, pain medication, your level of pain, and anxiety, can cause some nausea and vomiting. Our goal is to relieve your symptoms as much as possible. Prescriptions are written for an appropriate period of time based on your medical condition, type of surgery, and severity of your pain. Your primary care physician (PCP) will continue to prescribe your routine, daily medications for high blood pressure, diabetes, cholesterol, and so forth. We usually prescribe: pain medication (narcotics) to lessen your pain; antiemetic medication to relieve any nausea or vomiting; anticoagulant medication to prevent a blood clot; and stool softeners for constipation, which can be a side effect of pain medication. All medications have side effects which may include: constipation; diarrhea; gastric distress; liver and kidney problems; urinary retention; drowsiness; tolerance; addiction; sleep changes; risk to unborn children; skin reactions; changes in appetite; difficulty with coordination and concentration; and may alter libido. Combination with other drugs, such as your routine daily medication or alcohol, can cause drug interactions leading to breathing and other serious problems. Thus, it is extremely important for us to know about all of the medications you are taking (prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, herbs and supplements, recreational). We prescribe with your safety in mind. Certain pain (narcotic) prescriptions cannot be called in to your pharmacy, and must be picked up at the office or mailed to your pharmacy. You must call the office ***in advance of running out of pain medication***, to allow for postal delivery. Calls placed after 2PM will most likely be attended to on the following day. Calls placed after 2PM on Friday will most likely be attended to on the following Monday. Timing is crucial – you must plan ahead to receive your pain medication in a timely manner. Remember to ask for refills at your office visit. ***Pain medication prescriptions will NOT be written on weekends, holidays or after regular office hours.***

Medications must be taken only as prescribed. You should never take two tablets if one is ordered - it is unsafe to do so. Additionally, many insurance companies deny coverage for refills if you exceed the prescribed dose. After surgery you will be given a supply of pain medication based on the type of surgery you had or per certain physician guidelines. If you require pain medication beyond the normal postoperative recovery period, you will be referred to the MGH Pain Service, a local pain service in your community, or asked to sign a pain medication agreement specifically designed for your situation.

Altering a prescription is a federal offense and will be reported to local authorities and to all physicians caring for you. Not only is it against the law, but it violates the relationship with your provider. Pain medication will only be prescribed by one physician's office. We receive periodic reports from Controlled Substance Programs and pharmacies informing us about the number of providers prescribing the same or similar drug to the same patient. Thus, we must know if other providers are prescribing pain medication for you.

Safeguard your medications from being lost or taken by others.

Every patient is evaluated on an individual basis according to their disease, surgical procedure, overall treatment plan, degree of treatment side effects, and pain tolerance. These statements are merely guidelines, and were written in accordance with Federal and State policies.