

## **Controlled Substance Agreement: University of Michigan Health**

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### **What is a controlled substance agreement?**

A **controlled substance** is a drug or other substance that is tightly controlled by the government because it may be abused or cause addiction. The use of this medication is only one part of your treatment for this diagnosis. We are asking you to read this agreement, so you are aware of the risks and benefits of these medications.

### **What should I know about these medications?**

There are several types of medications that are controlled and may be prescribed by your doctor. All controlled substances have the potential to result in sedation and lack of coordination. Therefore, when you start taking a new controlled substance **do not drive, operate power tools or machinery, or participate in other potentially dangerous activities** until you know how you will react to this medication.

### **There are several categories of medications that are controlled:**

#### **Opioids**

Opioids are strong medications that may provide pain relief but may also cause harm or side effects. Due to the risk of shallow and slow breathing, you may receive an emergency rescue medication called naloxone to reverse the effects of this pain medication. A friend or family member may need to give you this if they find you unresponsive.

#### **Common side effects of all opioids include:**

- Itching
- Rash

- Severe constipation
- Trouble urinating
- Sedation

**The risks of opioids include:**

- The risk for dependence, substance use disorder and overdose.
  - There is an increased risk of addiction for individuals with mental illness and substance use disorders.
- An increased risk of short and long-term effects for females who are pregnant or are of reproductive age. These include, but are not limited to, **neonatal abstinence syndrome** (when the baby withdraws from certain drugs they're exposed to in the womb before birth).
- Serious risks, including death or disability if mixed with benzodiazepines, alcohol, muscle relaxers, or any other drug that may depress the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord).

Read the patient information section of your prescriptions for necessary information on using the opioid safely.

- Sharing or distributing a controlled substance without a prescription issued by a licensed health care prescriber is a felony.
- Disposal of opioids has shown to reduce injury and death in family members. Information on disposal of opioids can be found at:  
<https://www.med.umich.edu/1libr/Pharmacy/OpioidDisposal.pdf>

**Benzodiazepines**

Benzodiazepines are strong medications that can be used to cause sedation (such as during a medical procedure) or to treat severe anxiety or sleep disorders.

Your doctor may prescribe these medications to treat severe anxiety or sleeplessness, generally only for a short period. These may also be prescribed to help with anxiety related to an MRI or other medical procedure.

**Common side effects of benzodiazepines include:**

- Dizziness
  - Memory problems
  - Sedation
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- If you receive this medication for an MRI or other reason, have a driver take you to and from the appointment.
  - Do not combine these medications with opioids or other controlled substances.

**Stimulants**

Stimulants are strong medications that can be used to treat conditions such as attention deficit disorder or narcolepsy. They can help with attention and focus.

**The risks of stimulants include:**

- The potential of side effects impacting the heart and circulatory system
- Addiction
- Dangerous side effects when combined with other controlled substances

**Membrane stabilizers**

Membrane stabilizers, such as **Gabapentin or Pregabalin** are often used for nerve pain and to complement other pain medications.

**Common side effects of membrane stabilizers include:**

- Sedation
- Cognitive problems
- Dizziness

- Word finding difficulty

### **Reminders for all controlled substances:**

- Combining drugs can cause overdose, trouble breathing and death. This is more common if you are taking a combination of these medications or have medical conditions that make you vulnerable to these problems.
- If you must stop this medicine for any reason, you need to stop it slowly. Stopping it slowly will help avoid feeling sick from withdrawal symptoms. If you decide to stop medication, you should contact your doctor.
- If you or anyone in your family has ever had drug or alcohol problems, you have a higher chance of getting addicted to this medicine.
- Your doctor can only prescribe this medicine if you do not use illegal drugs.
- If you do not use this medication exactly as prescribed, you risk hurting yourself and others.
- You cannot increase your medicine dose without being told to do so by your doctor.
- This medicine will not be refilled early.
- You will take full responsibility for your medicine. If you have a child or pet in the house or live with someone who has a substance use disorder, you will keep your medications in a secure location.
- When you travel, keep the medication in the original prescription bottle with the label that has the **name** of the medication, **dose** and **name** of the doctor who wrote that prescription.
  - **Do not** put the controlled substance in a pill dispenser when traveling.
- The medicine will not be replaced if it is stolen or lost.
- You will not share or give this medicine to other people.

### **What are the best ways to manage my medications and keep myself safe?**

- Provide a urine or blood sample when asked to help monitor your treatment. Our clinic policy requires regular testing.
- Bring your pill bottles with all pills to the pharmacy for a pill count and verification if asked.
- Go to appointments and tests set up by your doctor. These may include physical therapy, x-rays, labs, mental health, etc. If you miss appointments, it may not be safe to stay on this medicine.
  - The prescriber may require an office visit before giving refills or may determine that the medication is no longer appropriate.
  - Be on time for appointments. If you arrive late to an appointment for prescription refills or monitoring, the appointment may be re-scheduled. You may not receive your prescription until you are seen by a provider.
  - Repeat late or no-show incidents may result in discharge from the clinic.
- With this agreement you grant your provider permission to talk to your pharmacy. They will check your prescription fill history by State Pharmacy registries (consistent with Michigan Law) and may on occasion need to call the pharmacy.
- If your provider decides that the risks outweigh the benefits of this medicine, the medicine will be stopped in a safe manner.

### **How can I get my prescriptions?**

You can only get this prescription from your primary prescriber's office. You will not get controlled medications from other providers (including the Emergency Department), without notifying your primary prescriber.

### **You can only receive refills during normal office hours.**

- Clinic policy prevents "on-call" doctors from giving controlled-substance prescriptions. No refills will be given when the office is closed. It is your responsibility to notify the clinic in advance that a refill is needed and allow

enough time for this to be processed. This may take up to 2 days and sometimes longer if insurance authorization is required.

- Unless your provider tells you otherwise, you will need a scheduled appointment for evaluation every 3 months (at least, it could be more often) to get refills for opioid based medications. For other controlled substances, the interval will be determined by your provider.

### **What are reasons for ending the agreement?**

- You may not be able to obtain controlled prescriptions from University of Michigan Health if:
  - You take more medication than prescribed
  - You fail to give requested urine or blood for testing or if those tests show:
    - Improper amounts of the prescribed medication
    - Non-prescribed medications (from friends, other prescribers, the ed, street purchases)
    - Illegal drugs
- You may not be able to be seen in this clinic, or any University of Michigan clinic, if you or your family members or friends are disruptive or threatening towards staff.
- You should understand that under State of Michigan law, the non-medical use of controlled substances (lying to get medications, giving, or selling these medicines to others) is a crime and will result in termination of controlled medication treatment.
- You understand that the goal of this medication is to improve function. If your provider determines that the controlled substance is impairing you or decreasing your function, your medications may be discontinued.

### **Attestation:**

Today, this treatment agreement has been reviewed with the patient and the implications of controlled substance have been explained. All questions were answered. After review, this agreement will be posted automatically to the medical record and a copy of this agreement will be printed or be made available electronically and given to the patient for their own records.

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by University of Michigan Health for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by U-M Health and for which U-M Health does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan

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