



Accurate Clinic

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There may be times when you plan to have surgery, including orthopedic or dental procedures. Such circumstances are often accompanied by the need for increased pain management, especially in the post-operative period. These special circumstances require appropriate communication between both you and the surgeon as well as between your pain management physician and the surgeon.

There are medical and regulatory implications that are significant in this situation. Most importantly, the surgeon must be completely aware of your current medications in order to safely dose anesthetics during the surgical procedure and to be able to accurately predict your post-operative pain medication needs. Without knowing your tolerance and experience with pain medications, the surgeon may under-dose your pain medications thus providing inadequate relief of your pain.

The regulations governing patients in the chronic pain management setting restrict patients to filling pain medication prescriptions to only those medications prescribed by their pain management physician. In order to avoid inadvertently breaking the rules and being accused of "Doctor Shopping" or being denied by a pharmacy for filling post-operative pain medications, it is important for patients to understand the process that must be followed when planning surgery.

First, notify your pain management physician of any upcoming surgery. He will then arrange for your surgeon to take over responsibility for managing your operative and post-operative pain, including writing your pain prescriptions for the days or weeks following your surgery. When the surgeon feels the time is appropriate, he should then provide your pain management physician with a final post-operative report of your condition and transfer back the responsibility for chronic pain management as indicated.

Even when the circumstances are such that it is not possible to advise your pain management physician before a surgery or procedure, it is still the responsibility of the patient to fully inform the surgeon of their chronic pain management medications.

In some cases it may be better for your pain management physician to manage your post-operative pain. It is particularly important in this circumstance to plan carefully with each physician to assure that your pain is adequately treated.

Please inform your pain management physician as soon as you are able to do so when planning any surgical or dental procedure so that he can assist you in meeting your pain management needs. Failure to do so may result in pitfalls that would otherwise be easily avoided.