

AVALON PRIMARY CARE, PC

PAIN MEDICATION POLICY

The federal and state governments are tightening their guidelines regarding pain medications called opioids. These include oxycodone (Percocet), hydrocodone (Vicodin), Morphine, and others. There are real reasons for these guidelines, as we have found that pain medications can be dangerous and lead to addiction and death. I am REQUIRED to follow these guidelines. Please note that I am aware of when exactly a controlled medication is given and how many are given to a patient via the Pennsylvania Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). This is how the state government monitors who is getting these meds and who is prescribing them. The pharmacies automatically mark a prescription as “filled” when the patient picks it up, not when it is filled. As of **June 1, 2023**, anyone who takes opioid medications (oxycodone, hydrocodone, morphine, etc.) will be required to comply with the following rules, based on State and Federal Mandates, and will be subject to the following consequences:

1. **Medications will be refilled ONLY on THE DAY THE REFILL IS DUE.** If you need an earlier date, you will need to have a very good reason. If the refill is a day or two early, you may be subject to a later refill next time. I will accept an early refill TWICE (2 times) per 12 month period. Please note, that I am fully aware of the months with 31 days, AND with February with only 28 days. Your medication will be prescribed for a THIRTY (30) DAY SUPPLY ONLY.
2. **You MUST request a refill on your medication at least one day before it is due.** I will be refilling controlled medications at the end of the day ONLY (approximately 8PM). Please do NOT call me multiple times during the day to see if I have done it yet. If your refill is due on the weekend, you MUST request the refill on **FRIDAY**. There will be a **\$10 charge** for requesting a refill on a controlled medicine on Saturday, Sunday or a Holiday.
3. **Patients taking pain medication MUST BE SEEN IN THE OFFICE EVERY THREE MONTHS, EITHER IN PERSON OR VIRTUALLY.** It is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to make and attend those appointments**. If an appointment is missed, you must reschedule as soon as possible. If you reschedule, you will receive a ONE (1) time refill prescription of your medication until your visit. If *that* visit is missed, you will get a refill equal to the days leading up to your rescheduled visit. If you do not attend the final visit you will not receive your medication. If **I** reschedule your appointment, you will receive a full prescription until you are rescheduled.
4. **You MUST keep up your MONTHLY PAYMENTS with me.** I am **ALWAYS** willing to work with someone who has had a financial issue. However, if there are more than three (3) missed monthly payments, I will assume that you are no longer under my care, and I will no longer refill your medication. EVERYONE in my practice is emailed the day their payment comes through, or if it has failed. There is NO reason that anyone should not be notified of a missed payment.
5. **EVERYONE will be subject to a URINE DRUG TEST AT LEAST TWICE A YEAR.** It will be RANDOM and NEEDS TO BE DONE WITHIN 48 HOURS (2 days) OF THE ORDER. Failure to comply with this will be considered a *positive* test, and you will NOT get your prescription.
6. **If you are taking more than 120mg of Morphine Equivalents, I will be sending you to a pain management physician.** The FDA, CDC and the World Health Organization, among others, have determined that the safest dose of opioids is approximately 90 MME (Morphine Milligram Equivalents) per day. This means that if you are taking Morphine, that you should

only take 90mg per day. Hydrocodone is about equal to Morphine, but Oxycodone is 1 and ½ times more potent than Morphine. The Pain Management visit must be completed within **three (3) months** of the referral. If not, I will be adjusting your pain medication to a lower level and begin a weaning process to possibly stop your medication altogether.

7. **You MUST keep your medicine safe so that it is not lost or stolen!** I will accept **1 (ONE)** report of a lost, damaged or stolen medication in a 12 month period. I will refill the medication only in the amount that would be left in the prescription before the next fill date.
8. **You MUST use ONE (1) pharmacy, unless there is a problem at that pharmacy.** If the pharmacy does not have enough of your medicine to fill the prescription, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to find out where to send the prescription. I do not have time to call multiple pharmacies to find out where to send it.
9. **You CANNOT get pain meds from another physician without telling me.** And, yes, I will find out by looking on the PDMP (see above).