

# RIGHTS, RISKS, RESPONSIBILITIES

## Two Years of Raising Awareness About Prescription Opioid Abuse and Misuse

### OUR IMPACT

**1 MILLION+**  
PEOPLE REACHED

Partner collaborations, conference participation, media partnerships and social media efforts have helped AAOA's messages reach more than 1 million people!

### OUR PARTNERS

**19 NATIONAL**  
STAKEHOLDERS

AAOA partners are the cornerstone of what we do, providing invaluable insights and strategic direction.



### OUR COLLABORATIONS

#### ENCOURAGING PA STUDENTS TO SIGN THE PLEDGE TO PAUSE



1,000s OF PA STUDENTS have joined the national Pledge to Pause effort over the past two years by committing to take a moment to pause and talk with their patients before prescribing an opioid medication.

#### SUPPORTING PHARMACISTS IN STATES ACROSS THE COUNTRY



OUR RESOURCES

40+ RESOURCES  
SINCE AAOA LAUNCHED

PARTNER TOOLKITS



**Questions to Ask Your Provider About Opioids**

Approximately 1.6 million women are prescribed opioids. Studies show that across all age groups, women are 40 percent more likely to become dependent users of opioids. Their higher rate of opioid use stems from increased instances of chronic pain, which can lead women to take more pain medications, often at increased doses, and for longer periods of time than men.

Avoiding misuse or overdose of opioid medications starts with a conversation with your healthcare provider. When you visit your provider, it is often helpful to bring a list of questions to ask, especially for women who have unique health needs, such as pregnancy, depression, anxiety or a history of substance abuse. It is important to have a full understanding of the risks of opioids as well as possible alternative treatments. You also have a responsibility to know how to take opioids properly and appropriately dispose of them to keep these medicines out of the hands of others.

The questions below can help you navigate conversations with your provider.<sup>1,2</sup>

- Is this pain medicine an opioid?
- When should I stop taking opioids and when would you like to see me again to discuss my progress?
- Should I consider partially filling the prescription?
- Should I also get a prescription for nonopioid medications that can temporarily relieve the effects of an opioid (codeine) to keep at home?
- Do you prescribe someone else's opioid products?
- For women who are currently or may become pregnant?
- What pain relievers should I take regarding opioids during my pregnancy — and during the postpartum period?
- Are there any warning signs related to opioid use that I should watch for during pregnancy?

You will also want to let your healthcare provider know about the other medications you are taking, as well as health conditions that could impact how you body reacts to opioids. This information could include:

- Your current medication list
- Other signs you are managing pain
- Alcohol use

Your trusted healthcare provider can offer the best advice to ensure that you stay as healthy as possible. For more resources, contact us at [www.AAOA.org](http://www.AAOA.org).

AAOA-HealthyWomen Toolkit



**JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST Prescription Opioid Abuse**

Resources and tools to help pharmacies combat the opioid abuse epidemic

Allied Against Opioid Abuse (AAOA) joined with the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA), National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA) and several state pharmacy associations to develop a suite of resources specific to the pharmacy community.

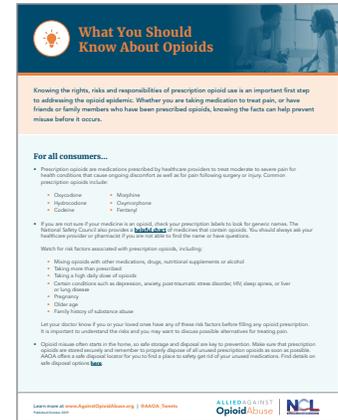
**Your Ally in Addressing Opioid Abuse**

Founded by the Healthcare Distribution Alliance (HDA), AAOA is a national education and awareness initiative to help prevent abuse and misuse of prescription opioids. Our goal is to contribute to solving the opioid crisis and support community pharmacists like you. We are seeking an equal space to help you talk with your patients about the rights, risks and responsibilities associated with prescription opioids.

**Partners**

Other AAOA partners include: Alliance for Aging Research, American Physical Therapy Association, BiInfectious, Clinician Action Network, Gerontological Society of America, Healthcare Leadership Council, HealthPartners, Men's Health Network, Mental Health America, National Association of Directors of Nursing Administration, National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities, National Transitions of Care Coalition and the PC Foundation.

AAOA Pharmacy Toolkit



**What You Should Know About Opioids**

Knowing the rights, risks and responsibilities of prescription opioid use is an important first step to addressing the opioid epidemic. Whether you are taking medication to treat pain, or have friends or family members who have been prescribed opioids, knowing the facts can help prevent misuse before it occurs.

**For all consumers...**

- Prescription opioids are medications prescribed by healthcare providers to treat moderate to severe pain for health conditions that cause ongoing discomfort as well as for pain following surgery or injury. Common prescription opioids include:
  - Oxycodone
  - Morphine
  - Hydrocodone
  - Oxycodone
  - Codeine
  - Paracetamol
- If you are not sure if your medicine is an opioid, check your prescription sheet to look for generic names. The standard label of all prescriptions is a **highlight** of you have that underlined. You should always take your medicine just as directed on the label. You should also be sure to read the name or brand name.

Watch for risk factors associated with prescription opioids, including:

- Mixing opioids with other medications, drugs, nutritional supplements or alcohol
- Taking more than prescribed
- Taking a high daily dose of opioids
- Co-occurring conditions such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, sleep apnea, or liver or lung disease
- Pregnancy
- Older age
- Family history of substance abuse

Let your doctor know if you or your loved one have any of these risk factors before filling any opioid prescription. It is important to understand the risks and you may want to discuss possible alternatives for treating pain.

Opioid misuse often starts in the home, so safe storage and disposal are key to prevention. Make sure that prescription opioids are stored safely and responsibly. Dispose of all unused prescription opioids as soon as possible. AAOA offers a safe disposal locator for you to find a place to safely get rid of your unused medication. Find details on safe disposal options [here](#).

Learn more at [www.AAOA.org/AgainstOpioidAbuse.org](http://www.AAOA.org/AgainstOpioidAbuse.org) | AAOA, Team

AAOA-National Consumers League Consumer Toolkit

PARTNER PERSPECTIVES

“AAOA is a perfect example of a coalition in which diverse organizations come together and their respective strengths can complement each other to make a difference.”

MARY GREALY | PRESIDENT, HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

“We joined AAOA because we strongly believe in its cause and want to help community pharmacists educate patients in this area.”

CARLIE TRAYLOR, PHARMD | ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, NCPA

PRESCRIPTION OPIOID SAFETY VIDEOS

AAOA collaborated with providers from [The Johns Hopkins Hospital](#) and [Cleveland Clinic](#) to educate consumers about pain management, prescription opioid safety and how to talk to patients about these important topics.



Three Things You Need to Know About Prescription Opioids



Three Questions to Ask Your Provider



Managing Pain After Surgery: What You Need to Know