



# Easing Dental Pain Safely

## *What You Should Know About Opioids*

---

If you or your teenager has pain after oral surgery, your dentist might prescribe medication. It's important to know that some people misuse certain medications, known as opioids, in ways that could lead to addiction. Here are some ways to help you and your family members stay safe:

**Talk to your dentist.** You can try a non-opioid alternative, like ibuprofen or acetaminophen, to manage pain without opioids. Make a plan to follow up with your dentist if pain continues.

**Tell your dentist about past drug use.** It's important for your dentist to know if you or your teenager have a history of drug or alcohol addiction.

**Ask for a shorter prescription.** Talk to your dentist about the shortest opioid prescription length that's appropriate for treating pain.

**Never share medications.** Only the person whose name is on the prescription label should take an opioid.

**Keep opioids out of reach.** Keep medications where other people can't access them.

**Get rid of leftover pills safely.** Ask your pharmacist how to dispose of any remaining pills. Or, visit the U.S. Food and Drug Administration at [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov) for information.

Learn more about opioids at [cdc.gov/drugoverdose](http://cdc.gov/drugoverdose). Visit [altusdental.com](http://altusdental.com) for more on how to manage your oral health.