



### Oral Treatments

- Anti-inflammatory medications – for muscle/bone pain
  - Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)
    - Ibuprofen, naproxen, meloxicam, etodolac
- Antidepressant medications – for muscle/bone and nerve pain
  - Tricyclic antidepressants (TCA)
    - Nortriptyline, desipramine, amitriptyline, imipramine
  - Serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRI)
    - Duloxetine, venlafaxine
- Anticonvulsant medications – for nerve pain
  - Gabapentin, pregabalin

### 4. Opioid Medications

- Opioids only take the edge off of chronic pain, no matter how much you take
- They will not take the pain away
- Any dose can be risky, especially higher doses, causing more side effects without improving your pain
- Methadone is an opioid that is sometimes used for chronic pain. With long-term use, the amount in the body can build up and put people at risk for respiratory depression (slow or shallow breathing) and possible overdose. Your heart should also be monitored using an electrocardiogram (EKG) every year when using methadone
- Opioids are no longer recommended for the treatment of chronic pain

#### What is an Opioid?

Opioids are a type of pain medication. Common opioids include:

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| • Morphine    | • Methadone     |
| • Oxycodone   | • Hydromorphone |
| • Hydrocodone | • Fentanyl      |

### Did You Know?

- Healthcare providers used to think opioids were safe and could help reduce chronic pain when used for long periods of time.
- New information is now available that shows long-term opioid use may not be helpful or safe in treating chronic pain.
- Long-term opioid use can also lead to multiple problems including loss of pain relieving effects, increased pain, unintentional death, dependence, opioid use disorder or addiction, respiratory depression (slow or shallow breathing), problems with sleep, mood changes, hormonal changes, difficulty with bowel movements, and worsening of the immune system.
- We now know that opioids are not the best treatment for most types of pain. Non-drug treatments are considered the ideal treatments for pain.



Please call   with any questions or concerns.

**Veterans Crisis Line**

**1-800-273-TALK (8255) or Text - 838255**