
Pain Pills

Pharmacies and insurance companies will only give a **one-week supply** of pain pills and they vary as to how they define a one-week supply. It doesn't matter how many I order as they override my order and use their own "protocol." Some pharmacies/insurance companies have determined that 84 pills is the maximum for one week and others will say that 56 pills is the maximum. Try to find a pharmacy that will give you 84 pills, as you may need 8 to 12 pills each day during the first week after surgery so you do not want to run out.

- Take **one or two pills every three to five hours as needed the first week** after surgery to keep your pain under control. **You may not need two pills every time and at every 4 hours, so do not follow the instructions on the bottle as that was written just so you can hopefully get the maximum of 84 pills.** Try one pain pill and see if that works. If after 20 minutes it doesn't work, then take the second pill. Always eat a small snack before taking a pain pill so you do not get sick.
- After the first week, start taking the pain pills, "as you need them" rather than "around the clock." **I expect you to be off pain pills four to six weeks after surgery** at which time you can try regular Tylenol and use moist heat. If you are not on a blood thinner medicine and if you don't have kidney disease or an ulcer, then you can take Aleve or Advil in addition to the Tylenol for pain.
- Knees hurt and you have to get your knee to bend all the way back, so **do not be afraid of the pain medicine.** You may get stiff if you stop the pills too soon.
- Always take a stool softener every day while you are on pain pills so you don't get constipated.
- Don't be afraid of the pain medicine – you just had an operation that is very painful so it is normal to need pain medicine for four to six weeks after surgery. I will stop giving you pain pills at that time.