

## Extended Release/Long-Acting Opioids

### Basic Patient Counseling Talking Points

Your patients need some basic information about the safe use of Extended Release/Long-Acting Opioids. This information provided here is an outline of those points which should be communicated clearly to patients, whether they are just starting ER/LA Opioid therapy or managing their pain long-term with chronic opioid therapy. This document can be printed and kept handy in your office for easy reference. Please also refer to the Patient Counseling Document.

1. **PRINT and distribute product-specific information; confirm that patients and/or caregivers will read it**  
(available here: [www.er-la-opioidrems.com/lwgUI/rems/products.action](http://www.er-la-opioidrems.com/lwgUI/rems/products.action))
2. **EXPLAIN details of how to take the medication**
  - a. Specific dosage
  - b. When to take it
  - c. How many per day (or within a certain number of hours)
  - d. How to take if patient cannot swallow pills/capsules (refer to product-specific information)
  - e. Special handling requirements for patch  
(patient should be aware that external heat, fever, and exertion can increase absorption, leading to overdose)
3. **EXPLAIN importance of adherence to regimen**
  - a. How to handle missed doses
  - b. Not to increase dosage or decrease interval OR abruptly stop taking opioids
  - c. When to call PCP (if pain is not controlled)
4. **WARN patients of what NOT TO DO**
  - a. Do NOT break, chew or crush oral medications
  - b. Do NOT cut or tear patches prior to use
  - c. Do NOT share opioids with others
  - d. Do NOT sell or give away opioids (against the law)
5. **WARN patients of adverse effects/consequences of opioids**
  - a. Describe common side effects (refer to specific medication information)
  - b. Remind patients to call PCP regarding side effects
  - c. Describe possibilities of severe side effects (including death)
  - d. Describe overdose risks (and risk of death from overdose)
6. **INSTRUCT patients on safe storage and disposal**
  - a. Lock boxes – safe from children, family members, visitors, pets
  - b. Disposal (refer to product-specific information)
    - i. Mix with coffee grounds and put in trash
    - ii. Flush down the toilet
    - iii. Find national, state, or local “take-back days”  
(refer to: [www.justice.gov/dea/index.shtml](http://www.justice.gov/dea/index.shtml))