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/rem/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)