

GOOD NEIGHBOR SCRIPT™

INSPIRATION FOR LIVING WELL FROM *GOOD NEIGHBOR PHARMACY*



Thinking Beyond Opioids: Are Opioids the Only Option?

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the U.S. is in the midst of an opioid crisis, with an estimated 130 people dying from opioid overdoses every day. The NIDA also estimates that approximately 1.7 million people suffer from a substance use disorder related to this class of drugs, which includes Percocet (oxycodone), codeine, morphine, Vicodin and Oxycontin — all drugs commonly prescribed by doctors to help manage pain. Anyone who takes these drugs, even those who do so under a physician's supervision, could be at risk. This is true even if they are being used only for the short-term, such as the first few days after an outpatient surgical procedure.

That's why it is important for patients to take a proactive role in their own pain management. If you are having surgery or are experiencing chronic pain, be sure to ask your doctor or pharmacist the following important questions about any medication treatment plan that includes opioids.

What are the common side effects and issues associated with opioids?

Although opioids can be effective at managing pain, even short-term use can come with some side effects, including slowed breathing, sleepiness, confusion, nausea and constipation.

But the biggest potential problems come with long-term use. For a long time, doctors were led to believe these drugs were not habit forming, so they started prescribing them more frequently for common chronic pain issues, such as back pain and migraines.

Unfortunately, it's now apparent that long-term use of this class of painkillers, whether after surgery or to manage chronic pain, can lead to serious consequences, including muscle pain, lung infection, heart infection and perhaps most distressingly, lifelong addiction and even death.

What should I ask my doctor or pharmacist before taking an opioid?

Experts from the Food and Drug Administration, as well as other public health agencies, now recommend that upon receiving a prescription for an opioid medication, patients should ask their doctors some important questions.

Here are the key questions you should ask:

- I have a personal — or family — history of addiction. Is it safe for me to take this medication?

- How often should I take this drug? How much should I take? How long should I take it for?
- How can I best reduce the risk of side effects — including addiction?
- Could this drug interact with any of my other medications?
- Are there any safe, reliable non-opioid alternatives to help me manage pain?

Although opioid medications may often be used as the first line of defense for acute pain, they aren't the only option available. According to American Addiction Centers, there are several non-opioid ways to deal with short-term pain, like after a surgical procedure or a broken bone, as well as long-term management of chronic conditions.

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

Common over-the-counter and prescription medications like ibuprofen, acetaminophen, aspirin and steroids are often more than enough to quell the discomfort experienced after a bone fracture or minor surgical procedure. Tylenol and Advil can also play an integral role in the management of chronic conditions by helping to relieve inflammation and in turn, feelings of pain.

Physical therapy and exercise. Although moving around may be the last thing you want to do when you are in pain, moving can actually help bring short- and long-term relief, according to University of Utah Health, an academic healthcare system. Movement-based therapies help control pain by reducing inflammation and strengthening muscles that can provide added support to help avoid injury or strain. As an added byproduct, this kind of exercise can also reduce your body weight, improve your sleep and heighten your mood — all things that will also minimize pain.

Neuromodulation. Some doctors may recommend electrical or radio stimulation to help "short-circuit" pain signals in the body, especially for patients who are experiencing chronic pain. These newer high-tech neuromodulatory techniques modulate how pain signals are communicated in the body and may promote the production of endorphins and other feel-good chemicals to help keep pain at bay.

If you still have questions, ask your local *Good Neighbor Pharmacy* pharmacist for more information on the safe use of opioids.

Health & Fitness Spring Allergies: 6 Surprising Facts You Might Not Know

Spring allergies affect more than 50 million people each year, according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA). If you're an allergy sufferer, you likely know the common causes and triggers for your symptoms. However, you may not be aware of these lesser-known facts about spring allergies.

1. Pollen travels hundreds of miles. Research has shown that pollen of pine trees, a common culprit of spring allergies, can travel over 300 to 600 miles.

2. Stress can make your allergy symptoms worse. Google data shows that stress spikes in the springtime, and stress increases the amount of histamine in your blood stream, contributing to annoying allergy symptoms. Doctors at Harvard Medical School also say that stress intensifies how bothered you are by coughing, sneezing and that runny nose.

3. Allergy symptoms spike during PMS and pregnancy. Higher levels of hormones, including estrogen, can make itchy eyes and other spring allergy symptoms worse, according to physicians at Penn Medicine.

4. Thunderstorms don't help. Rain washes allergens away, but thunderstorms don't have the same effect. The AAFA says that severe weather, which is most common during the spring and summer, can pick up and swirl pollen around, leading to a phenomenon known as "thunderstorm asthma."

5. Ladybug allergies are real. One study in the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology* journal found that Asian ladybugs (*Harmonia axyridis*) caused an allergic reaction in 50 percent of allergy sufferers. When warmer spring weather arrives, some people find Asian ladybugs inside and outside their houses, so researchers recommend that spring allergy sufferers check their homes for infestation.

6. Allergies decline as you grow older. There is some good news. With age, your immune system produces less immunoglobulin — the antibody responsible for allergic reactions — which decreases your symptoms.



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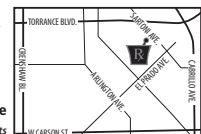
www.FoxDrugOfTorrance.com

Old Downtown Torrance
1327 El Prado Avenue
Torrance, CA 90501

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Fax: (310) 782-3519

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Prep Time
5 minutes

Cook Time
25 minutes

Total Time
30 minutes

Serves
4

April Recipe

Spring Vegetable Pappardelle With Pesto and Fresh Mozzarella

This spring vegetable pasta comes together in just 30 minutes. It tastes restaurant worthy, thanks to thick pappardelle noodles and flavor-packed pesto. You'll cook the asparagus and snap peas just until they're al dente, which gives plenty of texture to the finished dish.

Ingredients

8 ounces dried pappardelle noodles
½ cup basil pesto
20 spears asparagus
2 cups sugar snap peas
4 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 cups arugula
Salt and pepper
4 ounces fresh mozzarella balls

Tools

Large pot
Colander
Measuring cups
Measuring spoons
Cutting board
Chef's knife
Large skillet
Large serving bowl
Tongs or two spoons

Instructions

1. Cook the pasta.

Cook the pappardelle according to the package directions. Drain in a colander, but do not rinse. Transfer to a large serving bowl and toss with pesto. (This will keep the noodles from sticking or drying.)

2. While the pasta cooks, chop the vegetables.

Thinly slice the thick spears of asparagus on a diagonal, into pieces about 3 inches long and ½ inch thick. (Don't worry too much about getting them perfectly right!) Trim the snap peas and halve them lengthwise. Mince the garlic.

3. Cook the vegetables.

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook until it's just starting to brown, about a minute. Add the asparagus and snap peas, plus ¼ cup of water. Season with salt and pepper. Cook until the water evaporates and vegetables are al dente, about 3 minutes. Add the arugula and stir until the arugula wilts and everything is hot, about a minute.

4. Toss the pasta.

Add the vegetable mixture to the pasta in the large serving bowl, and use tongs or serving spoons to toss everything together.

5. Serve.

Divide the pasta among four bowls, and top each one with mozzarella balls.

Hids Can!

- Add the pasta and vegetables to the pot.
- Measure the pesto.
- Toss the pasta and pesto.
- Toss the finished pasta.
- Add the mozzarella.

Ask a Pharmacist What Can I Do to Prevent Seasonal Allergies?

A key way to prevent seasonal allergies is to reduce exposure. This can be done in many ways. Keeping pollen out of your house is an important first step in reducing allergy symptoms. Pollen can travel on you, so be sure to wash your clothes and hair after coming indoors. Close any windows and doors during high pollen count days. You should also install HEPA filters on air conditioners, furnaces and vacuums. Using a dehumidifier can help rid your house of pollen and keep the air clean and dry. Stay indoors on dry, windy days when pollen counts are highest. Local news stations and weather channels will tell you when pollen counts are high. Start your allergy medications BEFORE pollen counts begin to rise and your symptoms begin to stay on top of any allergy symptoms.



Jaime Cadarette
Pharmacist
LeFave Pharmacy
Alpena, Michigan

You can also use over-the-counter treatments to help prevent seasonal allergies. Oral antihistamines block histamine, which is the main causative agent of many allergy symptoms. Take an oral antihistamine once daily before allergy symptoms begin and continue throughout allergy season. Nasal sprays can also help to reduce nasal and head congestion. Decongestants are best for temporary relief of severe nasal congestion and sinus pressure due to potential side effects. Oral decongestants should be avoided if you have high blood pressure or certain heart conditions. Sinus rinses can quickly and effectively flush out bacteria and allergens, and restore moisture to your nasal passages with very low risk of side effects. Last, eye drops can be used to relieve symptoms of dry, itchy eyes.

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Local Love

Spruce Mountain Pharmacy

JAY, MAINE

"We are very in tune with our community."



How many years has Spruce Mountain Pharmacy been in business?

Spruce Mountain Pharmacy has been in business for 10 years. We opened in 2009.

What has been the most significant change within your pharmacy over the past five years?

We recently moved to a new location. The move came with some enhancements to our space and offerings. We added the SafeRx rapid pill pack system to help our customers with compliance. We also built two compounding rooms and added a vaccine/consultation room for customers to confidently enhance customer services in a private area. In addition, we improved our front of the store merchandise to match up with customer requests and make the front of the store more customer focused.

What are your favorite ways to get involved with your community?

We participate in community service and donate to youth sports, youth organizations and school projects. We encourage all of our associates to be involved in something outside our work space.

How do your patients and community shape your offerings? What keeps your patients coming back?

We are very in tune with our community. We participate in school functions and local sporting events, and sponsor free concerts at the French Falls Park and other community functions. This gives us all a chance to network and get feedback on how the pharmacy is doing and what we need to improve. We are the local community pharmacy and are focused on giving the best customer service we can provide.

What do you think your patients love most about your pharmacy?

We know their first names. To us, they are not just a number.

What does Locally Loved mean to you?

For us, Locally Loved is when you walk into your local coffee shop, and you hear someone say to the person they are with, "That's my pharmacist... I go to Spruce Mountain Pharmacy. I wouldn't go anywhere else. They know me." It's very rewarding to hear that outside the store.