

# FACT:

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

# CHRONIC PAIN AFFECTS MORE AMERICANS THAN HEART DISEASE, CANCER AND DIABETES COMBINED<sup>1</sup>

1. American Academy of Pain Medicine



## TREATMENT OF PAIN

You may have been prescribed opioids or another medication to treat your pain. However, pain medications have never been shown to cure pain on their own. Opioids are commonly prescribed to treat pain even though there is no clinical evidence to support long-term use of opioids. Because of their serious side effects, opioids should only be used short term (6 months or less) with other treatments such as physical or behavioral therapy.

### WHAT IS WEANING?



Weaning opioids from your treatment plan helps to determine if they are actually providing benefit in pain reduction, functional capacity and quality of life. It does not mean your physician is abandoning your treatment. Your treatment plan and its benefits will continue to be evaluated.

### WHY WEAN OPIOIDS?

- Potentially fatal
- Destructive
- Debilitating
- Potentially addictive

### HOW LONG DOES WITHDRAWAL LAST?



Major withdrawal symptoms last 3 to 5 days and will slowly go away. You may experience withdrawal symptoms even if you have only been on opioids for a short time.

### WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS:

- Racing heartbeat
- Watery eyes and nose
- Tremors
- Nausea
- Muscle aches and pains
- Trouble falling or staying asleep
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Lack of energy or appetite

## TIPS TO HELP YOU SUCCESSFULLY WEAN OPIOIDS AND MANAGE PAIN

- 1 Make a list of all the reasons to discontinue opioid therapy
- 2 Ask others for help, especially in the first few days
- 3 Keep your mind and body busy
- 4 Eat balanced meals with less sugar, saturated fats, less frying and less salt
- 5 Drink lots of water throughout the day

- 6 Exercise regularly (Try practicing yoga)
- 7 Track your progress by keeping a journal
- 8 Avoid negativity from the Internet
- 9 Learn something new
- 10 Read light, funny stories to help you fall asleep at night