

## **Why am I reducing your opioid\* pain medication?**

As better information has become available we have learned that your dose of opioid has much higher risks than lower doses.

- Your risk of accidental overdose is increased 900%.
- Your risk of dying sooner than you otherwise would is increased 300%.
- You are increased risk of injury.
- You are at risk for becoming the victim of a crime.

As many as 4 out of 10 people taking opioids will become addicted. Everyone taking them for a long time develops dependence. This means that you would have withdrawal symptoms if the meds were stopped suddenly. Higher doses of opioids have not been shown to help, and may actually increase your pain. Also there are not good studies that prove there is actual benefit from taking opioids for a long time.

We are going to gradually reduce your dose of opioid to a dose with lower risks. I know that this will be hard for you and that it is frightening. My team and I will work with you and be here for you as we make this change. We will offer a variety of resources and treatments to help with your pain and to help you cope with this change in your treatment plan. I am confident that this is the right choice for you and that you will be safer and better on a lower dose of opioid.

\*Opioids include hydrocodone (Vicodin, Norco), oxycodone (Percocet, Oxycontin), hydromorphone (Dilaudid), oxymorphone (Opana), methadone, fentanyl (Duragesic), morphine, codeine, Tramadol and others.

You can find additional information at the following on line sites:

- A video explaining the problem in more detail  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Na2m71x-hU&feature=youtu.be>
- Educational materials  
<http://www.supportprop.org/educational/index.html>
- 6 myths about painkillers  
<http://health.clevelandclinic.org/2012/08/6-myths-about-painkillers/>