

Barrie Drug Safety Strategy

FAQ's for Patients

What is the Opioid Patch for Patch Return Program?

The Opioid Patch for Patch Return Program is collaboration between physicians, pharmacists, and patients to promote the safe, effective, and responsible use of fentanyl patches, and other opioid transdermal (skin) patches. In general, it applies a “one for one” model, where patients are required to return “used” patches on the Opioid Patch Return Record Sheet to the pharmacy, before the next prescription is filled.

Why are these changes being made?

The Opioid Patch for Patch Return program is part of a broader effort to ensure community safety. In returning these patches, you are helping to reduce risks posed by “used” patches, which contain enough residual medication to cause significant harms to children, pets and other individuals not directly prescribed the medication by their doctor. Fentanyl and other opioid medications have received considerable attention in the media because of the accidental overdoses and deaths they have caused. This is partly due to medication like fentanyl being “diverted” to individuals who are not directly prescribed this medication.

How should the used patches be stored?

The program requires that you place used patches onto the Opioid Patch Return Record Sheet, in sequential order, so that each patch can easily be recognized. These sheets are available from your pharmacist and will be given at the time your medication is dispensed. Please also write the date beside each patch when you apply it to the Opioid Patch Return Record Sheet. Store used patches in a secure location i.e. Lock box.

How do we handle a vacation supply?

You must return the same quantity of patches that you received. If you require a larger quantity than usual because you are away for vacation, you must return the same number of patches that is given to you for your identified vacation in order to receive the next prescription repeat. The pharmacist will document the change.

Can I return patches to the doctor's office or another pharmacy?

No, the patches need to be returned to the dispensing pharmacist. Physicians are not equipped to receive used medication. The prescription and location of the used patches need to be verified by the pharmacist.

What happens if I lose a patch?

If you lose a patch, you should contact your prescribing physician. The pharmacist will also need to contact the physician. For example, if you return only 8 out of 10 patches, you will only receive one dose with your next renewal and your physician will be notified.

What do I do if I have concerns?

One of the risks of opioid medication is that your body may develop “tolerance” over time, and that higher amounts are required in order to receive the same level of pain control. Over time, some people develop addiction to opioids. It is important to diligently monitor how you feel while taking your medication and talk openly with your prescribing physician about any concerns. Seeking help early is key in avoiding potentially serious side effects.

If you need someone to talk to, you can contact:

- Canadian Mental Health Association 1-800-461-4319 or 1-888-893-8333 for the Crisis Line
<http://www.cmhastarttalking.ca/>
- Drug and Alcohol Helpline 1-800-565-8603
www.drugandalcoholhelpline.ca

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