It is normal for you to have pain and discomfort after surgery. Your care team will work with you to keep your pain under control. The goal is to manage your pain well enough that you can do physical therapy and return to your regular daily activities.

- **Your body needs help to recover from surgery.** The best way is to use strong medicine like opioids at first. If you do not, your sensitivity to pain may increase and you may have long-term problems. Opioids are also called narcotics, see page 2 for specific examples.

- **It may not be possible to take enough opioid medicine to completely remove your pain.** And if you take large doses of this medicine, you might miss new symptoms that your body is trying to tell you about. When you start physical therapy, you will need enough medicine to be able to do the exercises but not so much that you might miss pain signals if you overdo it.

- **Your care team will want you to take less pain medicine over time.** This is important because complications can occur when patients take opioid medicine longer than what is necessary for healing. Over time, you should be able to start reducing the amount and frequency of your pain medicine.

- **Your care team will need to balance the amount of medicine for your pain with the physical dangers of being on higher doses of pain medicine.** These dangers can include changes in thinking ability, drowsiness, and interrupted breathing while you sleep.

Other ways to control pain and reduce swelling after surgery:

- Use ice (such as an ice pack or ice machine) as instructed by your care team
- Elevate the leg that was operated on
- Relaxation techniques (see Resources section on back).

Opioid medicines work to decrease the feeling of pain that is received by your brain. But opioid medicines are only one part of successful pain control after surgery.
RESOURCES:

The following resources are available at kp.org and may be helpful during your recovery process.

RELAXATION AND PAIN RELIEF

(GUIDED IMAGERY) — Podcasts that promote healing are available for listening and downloading. They address a variety of health conditions and concerns.

Go to kp.org

1. Click on Health & wellness tab at the top of the screen
2. Click on Live healthy
3. Click on Podcasts (guided imagery) located on the left side of the screen
4. Select the “Pain” podcast

HEALTH GUIDES — These articles cover a range of health conditions, including pain management. You can read them online or print them out.

Go to kp.org

1. Click on Health & wellness tab at the top of the screen
2. Click on Conditions & diseases
3. Review the list Health guides located on the left side of the screen
4. Select a topic of interest to you

EXAMPLES OF OPIOID MEDICINES INCLUDE:

- Oxycodone (Roxicodone, OxyContin, Percocet, Oxyfast)
- Hydrocodone (Norco, Lortab, Vicodin)
- Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)
- Tramadol (Ultrim)
- Morphine
- Codeine (Tylenol with Codeine)
- Fentanyl Patch (Duragesic)
- Methadone (Dolophine)
- Oxymorphone (Opana)