

# Physician Fact Sheet

## Physician/Prescriber Reminders when Prescribing Opioids

### *Before Prescribing Opioids, Remember to*



**CHECK** your state's prescription monitoring program.



**DETERMINE** goals of using prescription opioids.



**DO** a Risk Assessment. If the patient is at risk for misuse or substance use disorder, make a plan to address and/or mitigate risks. Be sure benefits of opioid therapy outweigh potential risks.



**PRESCRIBE** the lowest dose for the least number of days. Typically, 3–5 days for most acute conditions, infrequently more than 7 days.



**EXPLAIN** the expected benefits, side effects, risks, and important safety measures to patients (and caregiver if necessary).



**DISCUSS** the amount prescribed, appropriate dosing, and the option to fill a lesser amount.



**DOCUMENT** in the medical record: goals, exceptions and reasons, patient education, and treatment plan.



**TAKE** special precautions when prescribing long-term opioid therapy.

### **Some Considerations**

- Consult with a pain specialist as deemed clinically appropriate by the treating prescriber.
- Prescribers should consider entering into a pain management agreement with patients when prescribing extended-release long-acting opioids in non-abuse deterrent form.
- Prescribers should consider entering into a pain management agreement for patients who are being prescribed opioids for long-term pain management, as the treating provider determines to be clinically appropriate.
- Consider co-prescribing naloxone for patients on long-term opioid therapy.



**PLAN** follow-up.

The Physician Fact Sheet is available at [www.massmed.org/opioidprescriberfactsheetext](http://www.massmed.org/opioidprescriberfactsheetext).

*Jointly issued by the Massachusetts Medical Society, the Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association, and the Massachusetts College of Emergency Physicians.*

These opioid prescribing guidelines follow Massachusetts laws and regulations as of August 2015. Practitioners outside of Massachusetts should follow applicable laws and regulations in their own state.