

**Wilkes Regional Medical Center
Emergency Department Physicians
Prescription Pain Management Policy**

Wilkes County has a very high rate of unintentional deaths due to overuse of prescription drugs, much higher than the national average. In an effort to decrease these untimely deaths associated with prescription narcotics and sedating drugs, the Emergency Department has adopted the following policy with regard to prescribing narcotic and sedating medications.

1. When patients come to the Emergency Department (ED) with acute medical conditions in which the Emergency Department physician feels appropriate to prescribe narcotic or sedating pain medication, the physician will prescribe these in very limited quantities. The amount of these medications will last only until you can see your primary care physician in his/her office. Any patient who returns to the ED seeking refills will be given **only non-narcotic pain medications**.
2. **Non-narcotic pain medication** only will be given to patients who have frequent ED visits due to chronic, on-going pain conditions, such as migraine headaches, back and neck pain, dental pain, fibromyalgia and/or neuropathies.
3. In the event of an acute medical condition exists **and** the emergency physician feels it is necessary that the patient be given a narcotic or sedating medication – **A responsible adult driver must be present in the room prior to the medication being given by the nurse.**
4. **Prescriptions for narcotic or sedating medications that have been lost, stolen or expired will not be refilled in the Emergency Department.** Patients who have chronic pain will receive **non-narcotic pain prescriptions** until seen by their primary care physician. It is every patient's personal responsibility to maintain active prescriptions with his or her primary care physician or specialist.
5. The Emergency Department have lists available of **Primary Care Providers Accepting New Patients**. If you do not have a primary care provider, this listing will assist you in obtaining a doctor for follow-up of your medical condition. These handouts are available at ED registration or from any ED staff member.
6. If the ED physician decides to prescribe a narcotic or sedating medication, all patients names will be checked first through the **North Carolina Controlled Substances Reporting System**. This database is a record of controlled substance medication prescriptions that the patient has received. This has been established by North Carolina in an effort to eliminate the dangerous, and often life threatening, practice of obtaining multiple prescriptions from different medical providers.

**Wilkes Chronic Pain Support Group - contact number – 336-903-7678
Narcotics Anonymous - 336-667-2800**

Any ED staff member can provide you with additional information on these resources upon request.