



I.P. No. 17

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

## USE OF MEDICATION IN RECOVERY

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Approved Literature

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Over-the-counter drugs have opened up endless confusion to the recovering addict. Always consult a pharmacist as to the composition of any medication in any form--pills, capsules, tablets, liquid, etc. Don't assume anything. Read labels and become informed of contents. Talk to experienced N.A. members and find out if they have had any experience with the type of medication you are thinking of taking. Be especially careful of cold, cough and flu remedies. These often contain alcohol or other mood altering chemicals which can trigger our addiction. Avoid any medication offered by well meaning friends or family members. Remember that we are recovering addicts and all medications are suspect.

### **PREPARING OURSELVES PHYSICALLY**

We have abused ourselves physically during our addiction. Because of this we may be more susceptible to physical illness and pain. It is important that we maintain our health through proper diet, exercise and periodic check-ups by our doctor. Remember, a doctor cannot give accurate advice unless he is aware of our history as addicts.

### **PREPARING OURSELVES MENTALLY**

By talking to others who have experienced similar afflictions to our own, we can learn what to expect during these times. Keep in mind that the consequences of ridding ourselves of the pain through medication and possible subsequent relapse are greater than the consequences of enduring the pain. It is amazing how our minds will just go back so quickly to our old ways and thinking. We should think long and hard before seeking chemical relief from short term physical suffering.

### **SPIRITUAL PREPARATION**

We have found through our experience, that a combination of talking about our fears and anxieties with the group, our sponsor, with our Higher Power, through prayer and meditation, along with reading our book and other literature on recovery can help in our spiritual preparation.

When placed in these crisis situations, we should remember there is a Power greater than ourselves who will help when asked. Some of us have asked God to keep us from getting caught up in our disease again through active use of prescribed medication. Others have written their feelings before, during and after the use of medication. These are a few of the ways that we can prepare ourselves spiritually for medication during recovery.

Remember--you are playing with life and death. Anytime an addict uses any medication, he is on the fence; recovery on one side and relapse on the other. Through spiritual preparation, our chances of surviving the use of medication during recovery are much greater. These resources should be a part of every phase of any ordeal.

### **WHAT TO DO WHEN WE FACE ORAL SURGERY**

Inform your oral surgeon the same way you would your doctor. Inquire as to the types and methods he uses. Get a second opinion. Prepare yourself the same way you would whenever you face using medication.

### **WHAT CAN WE DO WHEN CONFRONTED WITH AN EMERGENCY SITUATION**

Pray first when possible. Call someone in the N.A. program (sponsor, friend, etc.). If you

can't elaborate on your addiction, have them call someone in the emergency room staff, the same way you would your own doctor. It's really important to maintain your self-honesty in these crisis situations, because the chance of relapse is greater.

### **WHAT TO DO IN OUTPATIENT SITUATIONS**

Upon release from the hospital, your recovery does not cease. Continue working toward the Steps, attend a meeting the same day if possible, and contact your sponsor. If you are unable to attend a meeting, ask the group to bring you one. Extended hospital stays may be better than taking home medication. This will also help us if any withdrawal should occur.

Whatever pain we experience will pass. It is amazing how much pain we can really handle without medication. In this program of total abstinence, however, we need not feel any guilt after having taken a minimum amount of medication prescribed by an informed doctor.