
Controlled Substances Agreement and Informed Consent

The purpose of this Agreement is to prevent misunderstandings about certain medicines you may be taking for pain management. This is to help both you and your physician to comply with the law regarding controlled pharmaceuticals.

I understand that this Agreement is essential to the trust and confidence necessary in a physician/patient relationship. If it becomes medically necessary for me to be treated with controlled medicines, my physician will do so only based on this Agreement. I also understand that my physician is prescribing these medications in good faith for legitimate medical purposes.

I understand that if I do not adhere to this Agreement, my physician will stop prescribing controlled pain medicines and that I might be discharged from his/her care. Also, a drug-dependence/addiction treatment program may be recommended.

I understand that there is a risk of addiction with controlled pain medicines. The State of Alabama defines addiction as follows. Addiction is a neurobehavioral syndrome with genetic and environmental influences that result in psychological dependence on the use of substances for their mind-altering effects and is characterized by compulsive use despite harm. Addiction may also be referred to by terms such as ‘drug dependence’ and ‘psychological dependence.’ **Physical dependence and tolerance** are normal physiological consequences of taking pain medicines for extended periods of time and should **not** be considered addiction.”

I understand that opiate medications may have side effects, including but not limited to; nausea, vomiting, constipation, itching, sedation, respiratory depression, decreased sex drive, dental decay, slurred speech, impaired thinking, slow reflexes, overdose, and **DEATH**. For this reason, the physicians of The Birmingham Pain Center reserve the right to change or discontinue opiate medications at any time.

Withdrawal symptoms such as a flu-like syndrome, irritability, diarrhea, and muscle soreness are natural consequences of the abrupt discontinuation of pain medicine. Therefore, if you, or your physician, decide to discontinue your pain medicines, these medicines will need to be tapered off to avoid or diminish these withdrawal symptoms.

The State of Alabama and the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency place very strict guidelines for prescribing controlled medicines. Therefore, the following policies must be adhered to in order to receive controlled medications from the physicians of The Birmingham Pain Center:

1. The Physicians and Physician Assistants of The Birmingham Pain Center **ARE NOT OBLIGATED TO REPLACE PRESCRIPTIONS OR REFILL MEDICATIONS THAT ARE LOST, STOLEN OR DAMAGED IN ANY WAY**. It is your responsibility to take care of your medication. If you fear that withdrawal from your medication will occur, then call the Birmingham Pain Center and notify your physician.
2. **ALTERING PRESCRIPTIONS IS A FELONY**. If you alter or forge or call in any prescriptions you may be prosecuted. We will not treat any patient engaged or implicated in such criminal activities.
3. Chronic pain should rarely be treated with large amounts of opiates. It is your responsibility to exercise self-control. If you feel that your medication is not helping, or feel that you need something stronger or different, **DO NOT INCREASE YOUR MEDICATIONS YOURSELF**. You must call and make an appointment to talk with the physician concerning your medications. If a dose adjustment is necessary, it can only be prescribed by your physician. Failure to comply, may results in serious consequences, including **DEATH**.
4. We must be the only physicians prescribing pain medications for you. We will not treat any patient who receives **PAIN MEDICINES** from other physicians. However, we understand that another physician might prescribe pain medicine for an unexpected surgical or dental procedure, trauma, or an acute medical emergency. If that should occur, the Birmingham Pain Center requires that you call to notify us of the circumstance, the medication and amount prescribed. If you desire another physician outside of The Birmingham Pain Center to take care of your medicines, no controlled medication will be given to you from the physicians at this clinic. **You should continue to see your other physicians for all of your other medical problems.**
5. Do not take any medications other than those prescribed by your physicians. Do not give your medicines to others.

6. All of your physicians should be made aware of **ALL** medications that are prescribed to you. This includes Methadone from Methadone Clinics and Suboxone from Suboxone Clinics, as well as nerve pills, sleeping pills or sedatives by other physicians. Please let us know of all the medications you are prescribed.
7. Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, work at unprotected heights or any potentially dangerous activity until you have taken the medications for a while and know how your body reacts to the medications. If you feel impaired or appear impaired to others in any way, **DO NOT DRIVE. DO NOT OPERATE HEAVY MACHINERY. DO NOT PUT YOURSELF OR OTHERS IN A DANGEROUS SITUATION.** If you feel impaired or appear impaired to others in any way, contact your physician immediately.
8. If you fail to keep your follow-up appointment and run out of your medication, we will only give you enough medication to get you through to your make-up appointment. If you fail to keep this make-up appointment, no more medicines will be given to you until you see your physician. You must see your physician in order to get your medications refilled if you missed two appointments.
9. Periodic blood and/or urine tests may be required to determine if liver or kidney function is being harmed. Urine drug testing is also required to monitor for potentially dangerous drug combinations, medications not prescribed for you, illegal drugs, and compliance with your medication regimen. Any of these conditions could be potentially life threatening to you. These tests are not for legal purposes such as worker's compensation, employment, or other legal drug screens but are performed for your safety and to help your physician better treat your problems. The results of these tests are held confidential as are the rest of your medical records and in compliance with all regulatory agencies concerning medical records.
10. The Birmingham Pain Center physicians are not obligated to treat any patient who takes any illegal drugs (street drugs including marijuana) or any other controlled drugs not prescribed for that patient. Therefore, do not use any illegal drugs or any medicines that are not prescribed for you.
11. The use of alcohol while taking pain medicines, especially extended release medications, is extremely dangerous and may result in death. Do not use alcohol if you are taking pain medications or other sedating medications.
12. If we are prescribing your controlled pain medicines, your entire pain care needs to be done by the physicians and staff of The Birmingham Pain Center. This includes interventional procedures such as epidural steroid injections, joint injections, or any other "blocks" or procedures that we perform. Almost all physicians are capable of writing pain medications, however many choose not to do so. Since we are a comprehensive pain center, our physicians have specialty training in performing a wide variety of procedures as well as medication management. If your surgeon or another physician recommends a "block," you must have that procedure performed here. We will not treat patients who get interventional pain procedures elsewhere. Remember, the same physician that recommended or performed your block, is also capable of writing your pain medications, and you are always free to transfer your entire care to that physician's clinic.
13. Abusive behavior towards the staff will not be tolerated.
14. Failure to comply with any and all of the above may result in discontinuation of treatment with controlled substances and/or termination from the clinic
15. **The physicians and staff of The Birmingham Pain Center will not treat any patient with controlled pain medicines without this signed agreement in place.**

I have read, understand and agree to abide by these policies,

Patient Signature

Date