



Pain Management Awareness

Approximately 1.35 million young athletes suffer a sports related injury every year¹. Many of these injuries will have some degree of pain associated with them, and will often require pain management. The South Kingstown Partnership for Prevention is participating in the pain management awareness campaign thinkaboutpain.com (**TAP**) which encourages the parents, guardians, and coaches to educate themselves on pain medication when they are prescribed to an athlete.

Please consider the following when pain medication is prescribed to an athlete:

- 1) Does the prescribed medication have addictive side effects?
- 2) Is there an alternative medication available that poses less risk of addiction, or possibly eliminates the risk of addiction altogether?
- 3) Are there drug free alternatives such as physical therapy or exercise available that can reduce or eliminate the duration of consumption, or the need for pain medication?
- 4) Is the duration of the prescription consistent with the duration that pain medication will be required?
- 5) If the prescription exceeds the duration or quantity required to effectively mitigate pain, or the pain medication is no longer required, do you know how to properly dispose of the excess?
- 6) Can the dosage be reduced over time, or adjusted per the level of pain being mitigated?
- 7) Who will be managing the consumption of the prescribed drug?
- 8) Will the drug be stored in a manner that prevents accidental or unwarranted access?
- 9) Will the athlete being prescribed the medication be an active and aware participant throughout the process?

SKPP is not suggesting that prescribed opioids cannot be an effective component of pain management; we are simply encouraging you to educate yourself on the risks, expectations, and available alternatives when they are prescribed to an athlete. We encourage you to consult with your physicians and to monitor athletes throughout the course of treatment. For more information please visit www.thinkaboutpain.com and Rlprevention.org. Thank you for your consideration to this important matter.

1. USA Today - [1.35 million youths a year have serious sports injuries](#)

