

Patients

In 2018, Florida passed Chapter 2018-13, Laws of Florida, regarding controlled substances, that changed long standing practices on prescribing and dispensing of an opioid drug for acute pain.

It did not change how patients are treated for non-acute pain or chronic nonmalignant pain.

Acute pain does not include: (1) cancer, (2) a terminal condition, (3) pain treated with palliative care, (4) a traumatic injury with an injury severity score of 9 or higher, or (5) chronic nonmalignant pain.

If you have any questions regarding your prescription, please consult your prescribing practitioner or pharmacist for assistance.

Frequently Asked Questions

What did this law change for prescribing opioid drugs for acute pain?

The law limits the opioid prescription amount your doctor can prescribe for you for the treatment of acute pain.

What did not change?

Treatment standards for chronic nonmalignant pain, nonacute pain, cancer, palliative care, terminal illness, and medical conditions not related to pain.

What is acute pain?

Acute pain is a medical diagnosis by your doctor.

Why is my prescription only for 3 days (or 7 days)?

a. Under the law ([Chapter 2018-13, Laws of Florida](#)), most opioid prescriptions for acute pain have been limited to a 3 – day supply.

b. Under special circumstances identified by your practitioner, a prescription can be increased to a 7 – day supply.

Why did my doctor write “NON-ACUTE PAIN” on my prescription?

You were diagnosed by your doctor to have non-acute pain or chronic nonmalignant pain and your prescription for an opioid drug does not have to be limited to the 3-7 day supply.

If my prescriber fails to include the required information on the prescription, may the pharmacist confirm with the prescriber and write it on the prescription?

YES! Talk to your pharmacist.

If a prescription for a Schedule II controlled substance does not meet the requirements as specified in the law, the pharmacist should follow their current standard policy and procedures by contacting the

prescriber to verify written information contained within the prescription. Any deviation or change in the prescription should be promptly reduced to writing and properly annotated based on your pharmacist's current practice.

What is a prescribing practitioner?

Physicians, dentists, podiatrists, certified optometrists, ARNPs, and PAs are prescribing practitioners.

Does the law say that I can't continue to get medication I take for a chronic or terminal painful condition?

The standards for treating chronic non-malignant pain or a terminal condition have not changed.

My doctor says he/she is following federal law and cannot continue to prescribe the same medication I've used for many years.

Your physician may have chosen to follow the Centers for Disease Control guidelines and recommendations from the DEA.

BUT Florida's new controlled substance law did not change the standards for prescribing medication for chronic non-malignant pain.

The Florida Department of Health encourages you to discuss these matters with your physician so you can work together and continue to pursue a course of treatment that manages your pain and provides quality of life.

My pharmacy told me that there is a limit on painkiller pills to cover a maximum of seven days and it will also limit a day's total dose, even if my prescription is for more than that.

For prescriptions for acute pain, the pharmacy may have chosen to follow the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. If there is a difference in the dosage prescribed and the amount the pharmacy will fill, the Florida Department of Health encourages you to discuss these matters with your physician so you can work together and continue to pursue a course of treatment that manages your pain and provides quality of life.

My doctor said that he/she is following the Board of Medicine law about how much pain medicine he/she can prescribe. What law is that?

On the Board of Medicine website, you and your physician can find Rule 64B8-9.013, Standards for the Use of Controlled Substances for the Treatment of Pain. The link to the rule is at <http://flboardofmedicine.gov/resources/>. Select Florida Statutes & Administrative Codes then select Chapter 64B8: Board of Medicine.

My doctor said he will not treat my chronic pain anymore! What can I do?

You may want to search for a pain management clinic near you. Go to <https://appsmqa.doh.state.fl.us/MQASearchServices/HealthCareProviders>

- For Profession, choose Pain Management Clinic
- Fill in your county or zip code
- For License Status, choose Practicing Statuses Only

- Click Search

Is my prescription for cough syrup limited to a 3-day supply? What about my prescript Ritalin® for treating my ADHD?

No. This law is only for acute pain and does not apply to Hycodan® Cough Syrup.

No. This law is only for acute pain and does not apply to or Ritalin® for ADHD.