

# Prescribing Progress in Montgomery County

Since 2015, prescription opioid doses dispensed per capita in Montgomery County have declined by more than 43%. However, doses per capita are still higher than the state-wide average. As a trusted healthcare provider in this community, you can help increase patient awareness and adoption of alternative pain management treatments—and avoid the risks of opioids and other prescription medications, including stimulants and benzodiazepines.

**[AskForAlternatives.com](http://AskForAlternatives.com)**

**ASK  
FOR THE  
ALTERNATIVES**

Visit **[AskForAlternatives.com](http://AskForAlternatives.com)**  
to learn more about safe, effective  
pain management options.

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**PRESCRIPTION PAIN  
MEDICATIONS AREN'T  
THE ONLY ANSWER**

**ASK  
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**Talk with your patients  
about safe, effective pain  
management treatments.**



## ASK FOR THE ALTERNATIVES

# Five questions to ask before you prescribe opioid medications for chronic pain:

- 1 What is your patient's history with chronic pain?
- 2 Are underlying conditions or mental health issues contributing to pain?
- 3 What are measurable, achievable treatment goals?
- 4 What restorative and integrative therapies may be effective?
- 5 Are non-opioid medications or interventional procedures appropriate?

Patient education is essential to effective alternative pain management treatments. Be sure to talk with patients about your recommended treatments, share educational resources, and answer any questions they may have.



## Lifestyle Changes

For some patients, lifestyle changes like weight loss, exercise, dietary modifications, and smoking cessation may be long-term pain management solutions. Counseling sessions, such as those with registered dietitians or cessation experts, can help patients receive the guidance they need to make what can be challenging changes.



## Behavioral Health Therapies

Because chronic pain can significantly impact patients' daily lives, it may coincide with mental health issues like anxiety or depression. Behavioral health therapies, including cognitive behavioral therapy, meditation, and support groups, can be used individually or as part of a pain management plan.



## Restorative Therapies

Physical and occupational therapies, as well as relaxation and rehabilitative massage therapies, can address inflammation and stiffness, while restoring flexibility and strength, to help manage chronic pain in the long-term.



## Complementary & Integrative Healthcare

These therapeutic options are often used in combination with other therapies of a pain management plan. However, they can help manage pain on their own. Yoga is a common movement therapy. Manipulative therapies, such as acupuncture and chiropractics, may also be effective.



## Non-Opioid Medications

A variety of non-opioid prescription and over-the-counter medications can safely manage chronic pain. Most commonly, these include acetaminophen, NSAIDs, topical agents, antidepressants, and anticonvulsants. As with any medication, be sure to consider a patient's age, comorbidities, and other health issues before prescribing a pain medication.



## Interventional Procedures

These minimally invasive procedures, including steroid or numbing medication injections, radiofrequency ablation, and neuromodulation, can help manage chronic pain. Often image-guided for precision, these are generally outpatient procedures.