

On behalf of its members, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) is committed to addressing the opioid crisis. Plastic surgeons regularly provide pain medication following injury or surgery, and the ASPS is committed to providing solutions to prevent opioid misuse, abuse, and diversion. ASPS addresses the opioid epidemic from an educational, informational, and advocacy-based approach through the following principles:

- Opioids are valuable components of a balanced strategy of pain control.
- Pain is a normal part of the injury and healing process and is beneficial where it serves as an indicator of a problem.
- The goal of pain management should not be the complete eradication of pain but management of pain to a reasonable level until healing occurs.
- Patient education is a critical element. Pre-operative education about the use of post-operative opioids, post-operative pain expectations, and the need for continued education and assessment of patient medication needs during post-operative period are a must.
- Use of multimodal approaches should be considered over the use of single agents, particularly narcotics.
- Physicians should prescribe only what they estimate the patient needs, and this should be based on discussion with and evaluation of each patient.
- Physicians should not routinely need to prescribe medications for prolonged periods; and if prolonged pain management is needed, a pain specialist should be consulted.
- Physicians should follow good office practices, including protecting prescription pads and personally assuming responsibility for their use.
- Physicians should be aware of, and adhere, to all enacted Prescribing Legislation in the states in which they hold a medical license.
- Physicians should be aware of signs of drug-seeking behavior and should consult specific databases (such as Prescription Drug Monitoring Program databases) when prescribing (if available and feasible).
- Physicians should also comply with all institutional/ local and or state continuing educational requirements. Prescribing physicians should always adhere to the ASPS code of ethics.

Education and Advocacy

ASPS provides education about safe opioid prescribing through a number of channels such as e-learning, webinars, and in-person meetings.

ASPS members meet with their legislators and encourage them to sponsor bills related to combating the opioids epidemic.

The ASPS is committed to working with the National Academy of Medicine and the other collaborative partners to not only address the opioid crisis but to also ensure the surgical setting is considered a key opportunity for prevention.