



## Pain Management Awareness

Approximately 1.35 million young athletes suffer a sports related injury every year<sup>1</sup>. Many of these injuries will have some degree of pain associated with them, and will often require pain management over a period of time. Manchester Essex Youth Soccer (**MEYS**) is participating in the pain management awareness campaign [thinkaboutpain.com](http://www.thinkaboutpain.com) (**TAP**) which encourages the parents, guardians, and coaches of our athletes to educate themselves on pain medication when they are prescribed to an athlete in our program. Parallels can be drawn between the opioid crisis, and pain management in athletes.

The first step in assuring that our athletes are protected is to 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?

Manchester Essex Youth Soccer (**MEYS**) 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 in our program. We encourage you to consult with your physicians, educate yourself on any prescribed pain management treatment, and to monitor our athletes throughout the course of any pain management treatment. For more information please visit our website, or go to <http://www.thinkaboutpain.com>. Thank you for your consideration to this important matter.

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

