



# Reuter Insight

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## Ontario Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act

The abuse and misuse of prescription narcotics and other controlled substance medications is a serious public health and safety issue. Effective November 1, 2011, Ontario has implemented new rules when dispensing narcotic pain medications, in an effort to promote the proper use of prescription narcotics and other controlled substance medications while working to reduce drug abuse, addiction, unlawful activities and death related to these medications.

Prescription narcotics are drugs commonly prescribed to relieve moderate to severe pain, such as codeine and oxycodone, commonly known as Tylenol®3 and OxyContin®. With this new legislation, Ontario will be joining Nova Scotia, Alberta and British Columbia who already monitor prescriptions.

Effective November 1, 2011:

- Ontarians are required to provide an approved form of identification to your doctor or dentist and your pharmacist, when getting a prescription for a narcotic or controlled substance medication.
- Individuals may also be required to present their identification when obtaining prescription narcotics or other monitored medication for someone else.
- Doctors and pharmacists must record the identification information, as this may be requested by the Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and/or the Executive Officer of Ontario Public Drug Programs.

Ontario's Narcotics Strategy is aimed at making the prescribing and dispensing of narcotics and other controlled substance medications safer and more secure by providing education and raising public awareness about the safe use of these drugs, as well as educating the health care sector on appropriate prescribing and dispensing practices. The strategy ensures that people who need narcotics and other controlled substances for appropriate medical use will continue to have access to these medications.

The Ministry recognizes the importance of privacy rights, and has policies and procedures in place to protect the confidentiality and security of personal health information.