

Non-Drug Methods To Relieve Pain

Both drug and non-drug treatments can be successful in helping to prevent and control pain. The most common non-drug methods of pain control are described below. There are several treatments available that can be used alone, or together with medications to help manage pain.

They are:

- Imagery, visualization, meditation, stress-reduction and deep breathing relaxation techniques
- Music therapy
- Hot or cold pads
- Physical therapy: exercise and movement of muscles done under the direction of a certified physical therapist
- Change of position
- Walking
- Bath or shower
- Transcutaneous Electric Nerve Stimulation (TENS for short): mild electric currents applied to selected areas of the skin helping to interfere with pain sensations
- Complementary therapies such as therapeutic touch, Reiki, and massage.

You and your doctors and nurses will decide which are right for you. Many people combine two or more methods to get greater relief.

We hope that this information about different types of pain management has been helpful. Together we can work to manage your pain and make you more comfortable.

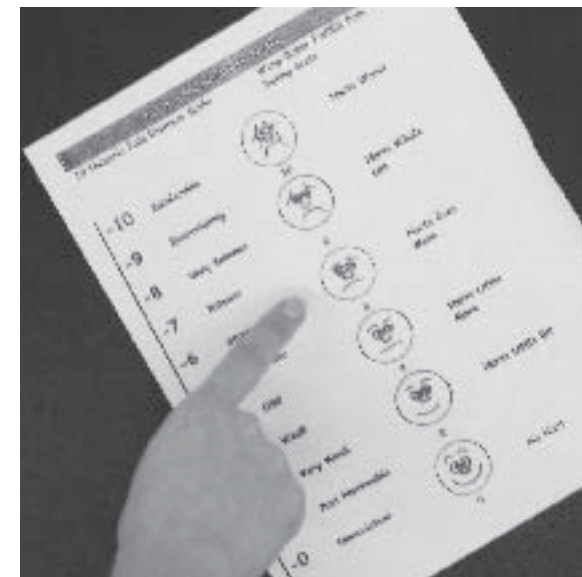
If you have further questions, be sure to ask your doctor, nurse or other health care providers responsible for your care.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A PATIENT WITH PAIN

- You have the right to have your reports of pain accepted and acted on by health care professionals.
- You have the right to have your pain assessed on an individual basis.
- You have the right to have your pain controlled, no matter what its cause or how severe it may be.
- You have the right to be treated with compassion and respect when you need medication for pain.

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How To Manage Your Pain



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About This Brochure

We have developed this brochure to help you learn about pain control. We encourage you and your family to read this information; if you have any questions, please ask your doctor or nurse.

Pain Is Different For Everyone

Pain is different for everyone and very personal – no two people are alike! One person may feel pain more quickly and more intensely than another individual. The most important thing is that people who suffer pain know how to describe it and be able to play a vital role in helping to manage it.

There Are Two Types Of Pain

1. Acute pain such as a cut, a broken bone, surgery, or a sprained ankle
2. Chronic pain, such as back pain, arthritis, or cancer pain lasts for longer periods of time and may range from mild to severe

Speak Up About Pain

To get help with relieving your pain, it is important that you tell your doctor or nurse. Don't think that you are not being a good patient, or that you are a weak person when discussing your pain. Describe your pain as well as you can. Don't make light of it, but don't exaggerate. Research has shown that treating pain promotes the well-being of the whole person.

It is also helpful to describe your pain:

- What does the pain feel like?
- Is it sharp, dull, throbbing, burning, tingling?
- Where is the pain located?
- Is it constant or does it come and go?
- How much pain do you feel on a scale from zero to ten with zero being no pain and ten being the worst possible pain you can imagine.

Reporting your pain as a number helps the doctors and nurses know how well your treatment is working and whether to make any changes.

NUMERICAL PAIN SCALE

0	3	5	7	10
None	Mild	Moderate	Intense	Severe

Take Control Of Your Pain

Pain is easier to manage when it is mild than when it is severe, and there is no need to suffer when it can be avoided. Take (or ask for) pain relief drugs when pain first begins. This is a key step in proper pain control.

Pain control can help you:

- Enjoy greater comfort while you heal.
- Get well faster. With less pain, you can start walking, do your breathing exercises, and get your strength back more quickly.

While pain cannot always be completely relieved, it can be managed to such a

degree that you will be able to heal faster or enjoy life more. Please understand that, depending on the type of medications you take, they can take time, possibly days or longer, to start working and giving you pain relief.

Pain Medications

There are many different types of pain medications. Your doctor will order the best medication, or combination of medications, for your type of pain. Please let your doctor or caregiver know if your pain is not getting better.

Side Effects

While not all people get them, many medications cause side effects at one time or another. Side effects may include drowsiness, sleepiness, nausea and vomiting. This may happen when you first start to take medicines and usually wears off after a short period of time. You may be constipated during the time you are taking the medicine. Skin rashes and itching, caused by an allergic reaction to pain medicine, may also occur for some people.

Don't worry about getting "hooked" on pain medicines. Studies show that this is very rare, unless you already have a problem with drug abuse.

Remember, over-the-counter medications, including herbs, are potent products and can sometimes interact with other medications.