

About Pain and Pain Control

Facts About Pain Control

- **Control of your pain is part of your overall treatment.** Talking about pain will not distract your doctor from treating your disease. Just because pain gets worse does not mean that your health problem is worse.
- **Pain can almost always be relieved.** However, no one doctor can know everything about all medical problems. If you are in pain and your doctor suggests no other options, ask to see a pain specialist or have your doctor talk with one.
- **Telling the doctor or nurse about pain is not a sign of weakness.** You have a right to have relief from pain!

Ask for relief from pain!

- **Most people do not get 'high' or lose control when they take pain medicines as prescribed by their doctor.** Some medicines may make you feel sleepy or drowsy. This effect usually goes away in a few days. If you get dizzy or feel confused, tell your doctor or nurse. Changing the dose or medicine can usually solve this type of problem.

Uncontrolled Pain Interferes With:

- Sleep
- Immune System
- Healing
- Thinking Clearly
- Work
- Daily Activities
- Appetite

Uncontrolled Pain Makes You Feel:

- Tired
- Worried
- Angry
- Stressed
- Lonely
- Frustrated
- Depressed

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Learn more about your health care.

- **Your body does not easily become resistant to pain medicine, especially over the short term.** Stronger medicines should not be saved for 'later.' Pain should be treated early. It is important to take the medicine needed at the time, and take it as ordered by your doctor.
- **People who take pain medicine as the doctor orders rarely become addicted.** People usually do not need to worry about addiction when the medicine is taken properly. But always let your doctor know if you have problems. Even when opioid (oh-pee-oyd) medicines are taken for pain they rarely cause a problem. The doctor will slowly lower the dose when it is time to stop them.
- **If you cannot afford the pain medicines you need, tell someone.** Tell your doctor, nurse or social worker if you cannot afford your pain medicine. There are ways you can get help.

Talking About Pain

It is very important that you talk about your pain with your doctors and nurses and ask for pain relief. Your healthcare professionals cannot know about your pain unless you tell them. Pain can have many difficult effects.

- To control pain, begin by talking about it. Talk to your doctor or nurse about your pain and ask for pain relief. Tell them as much as you can about your pain.
 - ▶ **Location:** Where does it hurt?
 - ▶ **Intensity:** How strong does the pain feel?
 - ▶ **Duration:** How long do you feel the pain? How often does the pain occur?
 - ▶ **Causes:** What makes the pain worse?
 - ▶ **Relief:** What helps the pain? What types of remedies do you use for the pain? How much relief do you get from pain relief remedies you use?
 - ▶ **What the pain is like:** Is it burning? sharp? dull? stabbing? spasms? aching?

• **Ask your doctor or nurse:**

- ▶ What treatment or medicine can you suggest for me to relieve my pain?
- ▶ How and when should I take the medicine, and for how long?
- ▶ What are the side effects of the medicine? What should I do if side effects occur?

Pain Rating Scales

We like to use a pain rating scale to help us understand your pain and to set goals for pain relief. We will ask you regularly about your pain, but anytime you have pain please let us know. Please rate your pain using one of the scales below. Try to use the same scale whenever you rate your pain.

"Zero to Ten" Scale (0 to 10) for rating pain.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Pain **Moderate Pain** **Worst Possible Pain**

May be duplicated for use in clinical practice. As appears in McCaffery M, Pasero C: Pain: Clinical manual, p.67, 1999, Mosby, Inc.

Wong-Baker FACES Pain Rating Scale

0 2 4 6 8 10

No Hurt **Hurts Little Bit** **Hurts Little More** **Hurts Even More** **Hurts Whole Lot** **Hurts Worst**

From Wong, D.L., Hockenberry-Eaton, M., Wilson, D., Winkelstein, M.L., Ahmann, E., DiVito-Thomas, P.A. Whaley and Wong's Nursing Care of Infants and Children, ed. 6, St. Louis, 1999, p. 2040. Copyrighted by Mosby, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

More Information

- For more detailed information ask for these other patient education materials:
 - ▶ Managing Cancer Pain
 - ▶ Managing Chronic Pain
 - ▶ Managing Acute Pain
 - ▶ Pain Relief after Surgery: A Patient's Guide

- **Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.**