



Pain Management & Alternatives

MU Patient Education Series

Pain Management & Alternatives:

Pain is defined differently to different people. Pain is an uncomfortable feeling and/or an unpleasant sensation and can be anywhere in the body. Pain is usually an indication that something is wrong. Pain can come on suddenly or can come appear at a slow pace. Pain can be mild or severe and can come and go or be constant. Pain can also be acute or chronic. If you have pain, recognize your symptoms and seek treatment.

ACUTE PAIN:

Acute pain may be mild and last just a moment, or it might be severe and last for weeks or months. Usually acute pain does not last longer than six months. It typically will disappear when the cause of pain has been treated or has healed. If acute pain is not relieved it could lead to chronic pain.

Examples of acute pain:

- Headache
- Toothache
- Broken bone
- Labor or child birth

CHRONIC PAIN:

Chronic pain may start with an injury or infection, or there might be an ongoing cause of pain. Sometimes people suffer from chronic pain without any injury. Chronic pain will continue despite the fact that the injury has healed. This pain may last for weeks, months, or years. Chronic pain can cause problems if untreated. Anxiety, stress, depression, anger, and fatigue are some of the problems that chronic pain can cause. These problems can make a person unresponsive or resistant to pain medications or other therapies. It is important to get pain under control.



Examples of chronic pain:

- Migraines
- Low back pain
- Cancer pain
- Arthritis pain
- Fibromyalgia

ASSESSING YOUR PAIN:

- Document location of pain
- Describe your pain
- How long does pain last
- What relieves and worsens the pain

PAIN TREATMENT OPTIONS:

Pain may be treated in different ways. It depends on how severe the pain is. Several options may be used in combination before pain is relieved.

PAIN TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES:

- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)
- Acetaminophen (over the counter medicines)
- Narcotics (prescription medicine)
- Localized anesthetic (pain killer medicine added to area of pain)
- Nerve blocks (blocking of a group of nerves with local anesthetics)
- Acupuncture
- E-stimulation (electrical stimulation)
- Physical therapy (exercise techniques)
- Surgery
- Psychotherapy
- Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing
- Biofeedback
- Behavior modification
- Chiropractic stimulation
- Supplements and vitamins



NON MEDICINAL WAYS TO LIVE WITH PAIN:

- Take deep breaths
- Meditate
- Reduce stress
- Track your pain
- Eat healthy
- Exercise
- Music therapy
- Hypnosis
- Yoga
- Massage

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