

## CONCERNS ABOUT TAKING PAIN MEDICATION

- Asking for pain medicine:
  - Is not complaining or “drug seeking.”
  - Will not distract your doctor or nurse from providing you with good cancer care. They understand the causes and the need to treat pain.
  - Will keep you comfortable and will be best for your overall recovery.
- You may have some drowsiness and/or mild nausea at first. These will go away within a few days. Medicine can be given to help with nausea.
- Patients who have pain rarely have problems with addiction.
- Your pain medicine may not work as well as it did initially. This is called “tolerance.” If this happens, your medicine can be increased or changed to keep you comfortable.



## KARMANOS IS HERE TO HELP

Karmanos Cancer Institute is a National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated comprehensive cancer center. We have competed for and continuously maintained this prestigious designation since 1978. Earning the NCI’s top designation confirms our commitment to excellence and a promise to bring the best to our cancer patients.

We know that receiving a cancer diagnosis is a life-changing event. Our patients’ health and well-being are our top priorities. As part of McLaren Health Care, Karmanos is the largest provider of cancer care in Michigan. Our physicians specialize in the evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of more than 200 known types of cancer, from the most common to the rarest forms of the disease.

### OUR VISION

A world free of cancer

### OUR MISSION

To lead in transformative cancer care, research and education through courage, commitment and compassion



CANCER INSTITUTE  
Wayne State University

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# YOUR RIGHT TO PAIN CONTROL

KEEPING YOU COMFORTABLE



**YOUR BEST CHANCE.**



## UNDERSTANDING PAIN

Learning about pain can help you and your caregivers keep you as comfortable as possible. Pain is a sensation that hurts and signals the body that it is injured in some way. It usually goes away when the injury heals or the cause of pain is removed.

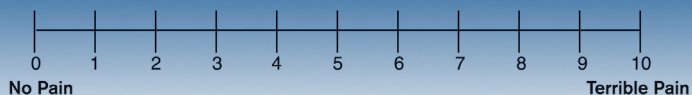
*Pain is personal.*

*Only you can describe how you feel.*

### Your nurse will ask you to describe your pain

- Where is your pain located?
- Is it sharp, stabbing, aching, shooting, throbbing, burning or pinching?
- Does it come and go (intermittent) or is it ongoing (constant)?
- Does anything make the pain better or worse?
- On a scale from 0 (no pain) to 10 (worst pain), how would you rate your pain?

Please point to the number that best describes your pain.



## CAUSES OF PAIN

- Toothache, headache or a pulled muscle
- Surgery (area where you were cut)
- Some cancers (that press on a nerve, organ or other body part)

## CANCER PAIN

*Not all cancer patients have pain*

- For some, cancer pain can be mild or severe. Severe pain is often caused by a tumor pressing on a nerve, organ or other body part. It may be necessary to try different medications to control your pain. Most cancer pains can be controlled.

## PAIN AFTER SURGERY

It is normal to have pain after surgery. It is most intense during the first 24 hours.

It is not always possible to be completely pain free right after surgery. With medication and time, your pain will decrease.

## ASK YOUR NURSE

Your nurse will ask if you have pain or discomfort.

- Tell your nurse if you have pain. It is easier to control pain before it gets too severe.
- Controlling your pain allows you to take deep breaths and move around more freely.
- Within an hour after you take your pain medicine, your nurse will ask you to rate your pain again.
- Your pain treatment will be adjusted as needed to make you as comfortable as possible.

## TREATMENT

Your treatment for pain will depend on the cause.

**Medical treatments** for pain may include:

- Pain medication
- Nerve block
- Radiation therapy to shrink cancer tumors that cause pain

## COMPLIMENTARY THERAPIES

These non-pharmacological (no medication) treatments can be used by themselves or with your pain medications to help ease pain and make you feel more comfortable.

## DISTRACTION

- Reading, playing games, watching TV and other hobbies can help by moving your focus away from your pain.

## MOVEMENT

- Moving around more by walking, sitting up in the chair, stretching or working with physical therapy can strengthen muscles and reduce pain.

## RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

- Deep breathing, meditation, music therapy and guided imagery can help you relax and decrease pain. The Care Channel (Channel 48) is available to help you relax.

## MASSAGE

- Gentle rubbing or pressure applied to the body can provide relief from pain and help reduce anxiety.

## HEAT AND COLD

- Placing a heating pad or ice pack can soothe sore muscles or numb pain.