



ASSESSING AND MANAGING PAIN

We want you to be as comfortable as possible during your hospital stay. Share your feelings with us; we are here to help.

You will be asked about your pain level when you enter the hospital. You and your family will be informed about effective pain relief, as it is an important part of your medical treatment. We will give you information about your pain control needs and together we will decide how to control it.



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PAIN CONTROL

A GUIDE TO ASSESSING AND MANAGING PAIN



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COMMUNICATION IS KEY

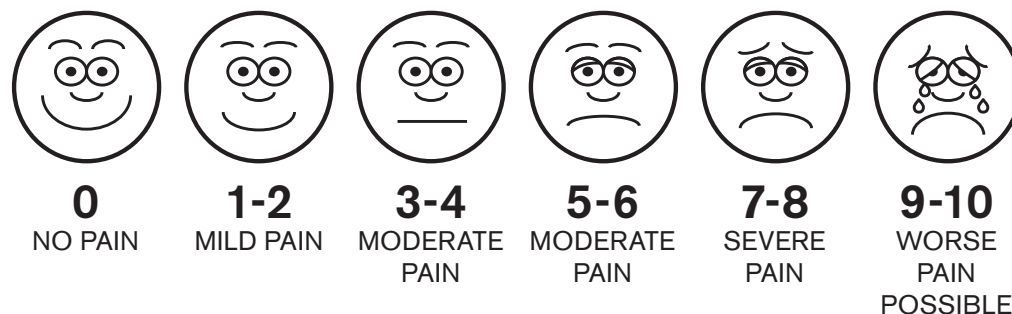
Telling your doctor or nurse that “it hurts” is one way to express your pain. By using a pain scale to rate your pain, your physician can create a pain management program tailored to your individual needs.

Staff will ask specific questions such as:

- Where is the pain located?
- Does the pain come and go or is it continuous?
- Would you describe the pain as sharp, dull, aching, or throbbing?
- What makes the pain better or worse?

Once you are on pain medication, we will continue to evaluate your pain level and make sure you are receiving the correct dosage. Please continue using the pain rating scale of 0 to 10.

PAIN SCALE



DON'T WAIT – TELL SOMEONE

Please tell us when you have pain. Pain medication works best when it is given regularly. If you wait until the pain is severe, it takes longer to relieve and is harder to control. Your doctor may order your pain medication on a regular schedule; and you may not need to ask the nurse for pain medication. Some pain medication is ordered on an as-needed basis. You are responsible to tell your nurse when you need pain medication.

You have the right to appropriate assessment and management of pain. We want you to have a quick, effective and individualized response when you say you are having pain.

DON'T BE AFRAID OF ADDICTION

When taking pain medication under the care of a physician, addiction is very rare in patients without a history of drug or alcohol abuse. Needing an increased amount of medication **does not** mean

you will become addicted. Please discuss these fears with your doctor or nurse.

COPING SKILLS

For some people, watching TV, listening to music, reading, or talking to visitors takes their mind off pain. Ask your nurse for an iPod, CD player, radio, your favorite music, or books on tape. Relaxation techniques or massage therapies are also helpful. Your doctor may order heat or cold treatments if it is appropriate for your condition. If you have a method that works to relieve your pain at home, please discuss it with your care team.

BACK AT HOME

If your physician expects that you will have continued pain after you leave the hospital, pain medication may be prescribed. Upon discharge, your nurse will discuss how to take your pain medication and provide any further instructions, if needed.