

## Pain Management for Patients

It is important to take your pain relief medication at least half an hour before you perform any exercises that are required as part of your treatment.

Please tell your nurse or doctor about any pain that does not get better, even after having pain medicine.

Some options for pain relief include:

- **Tablets** (capsules or liquids) that you swallow
- **Occasional injections**
- **Continuous drip** containing pain medicine
- **Patient Controlled Analgesia (PCA)** small doses of pain medicine released into your drip which you can control
- **Local Anaesthetics** given near your wound that blocks the feeling of pain
- **Epidural Pain Medicine** given into your back that blocks pain over your wound
- **Cold packs**

## Pain Management for Patient

We hope we have answered all of your questions but if you would like to know more please write any questions you have here as a reminder to ask your nurse or doctor.

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References: Victorian Quality Council – Acute Pain Toolkit 2007

The information contained within this publication is a guide only. Readers should seek and follow the medical advice provided by their own doctor.

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Feedback was provided by consumers in the review of this brochure.

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# Your Pain Management in Hospital

## **Managing Your Pain in Hospital**

It is normal to be concerned about surgery and the possibility of pain after the procedure. By controlling your pain as best we can, you are likely to recover faster.

### ***What if I already take pain relief medication?***

If you are taking medications for pain, depression or anxiety on a regular basis, you must let your nurse or doctor know. This will ensure that you get the treatment that suits you best. If you have had surgery before, talk to your doctor about what has worked for you in the past.

### ***Is there anything else I should tell the Doctor or Nurse?***

Yes - tell your doctor or nurse if you drink alcohol, smoke, take sleeping tablets, natural medications or any recreational drugs. This information is important to know when they are ordering your pain medication.

### ***How often will the Nurse/Doctor check on me?***

It is important that the nurse knows the pain relief medications are working and not making you too drowsy, so you will be checked regularly even overnight.

You can also press the nurse call button for assistance whenever you need it.

Your treating doctors will see you regularly.

### ***Will this ensure that all my pain will be gone?***

It is our aim to make you as comfortable as possible, especially for moving around and performing activities necessary to get better. The discomfort you might experience cannot always be removed completely.

Please tell the nurse if your pain is getting worse or not improving.

### ***Are pain relief medications bad for you or addictive?***

No, having pain relief medications to ease short-term pain is not addictive.

However, all medications may produce side effects, so you must tell the nurse if you feel sick or very sleepy.

Every person responds differently to pain relief medications. We work with you to find out the best type for you.

Pain relief medication may make some people feel a little nauseated or constipated; the nurse can give you something to help control this.

Occasionally itching and dizziness can occur. Please tell your nurse if you feel this way.

If necessary the doctor may change the pain relief medication all together.

## ***How can I help control my pain?***

As it is harder to ease pain once it has taken hold, it is important that you ask your nurse for pain relief medication before you get too uncomfortable.

You need to tell us how you feel and particularly how strong your pain is.

The nurse will ask you to describe your pain – this is how we know how you are feeling and what is working best for you.

Pain from different parts of the body comes from different causes. Knowing where your pain is coming from and how it feels (aching, burning, stabbing) helps us to give you the best treatment.

You can describe your pain by considering the following questions:

- *Does it hurt when you are resting?*
- *Does it hurt when you move?*
- *Can you take a deep breath easily?*
- *Where is the pain?*
- *Is it dull or sharp, constant or stabbing, burning or aching?*

The nurse may also ask you to score your pain out of 10 as follows.

0 = no pain

10 = worst pain imaginable

This allows the nurse to know if your pain is improving or getting worse.